CLAN-ALBIN.

CLAN-ALBIN:

A NATIONAL TALE.

A nation fam'd for song and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
Patient of toil; serene amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

BEATTIE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. I.

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BY THE EDITOR.

TALES and Novels are generally of too delicate a structure to sustain the weight of those old-fashioned things called Prefaces, even if their lively readers had patience to peruse such heavy performances. By the courtesy of England, however, writers of all descriptions may claim the privilege of explaining their design in coming before the public; and not without good reason. But for this right, how often might the stupid reader plod on through a long work, without at all suspecting, how much the author intended his edification and entertainment in every chapter and page?

Few of the old romance or novel writers appear to have had any higher purpose than the

mere amusement of their readers,—a very good purpose too: But, in this clever and aspiring age, we have conceived the project of tricking grown ladies and gentlemen into knowledge and goodness, by a process somewhat similar to that by which the ingenious Professor Von Feinaigle dextrously grinds the little boys of Ireland into philologists and philosophers, while they innocently fancy themselves engaged in trundling a hoop, or tossing a ball. The Tale which occupies the following pages, has, as I take it, no pretensions of this exalted sort. It neither usurps the privileges of the moralist nor the preacher. It appears, indeed, to have merely the plain, direct character, and single-hearted purpose, of the old-fashioned novel, with no loftier design, than harmlessly to beguile a few of those hours which can neither be devoted to business, nor redeemed to wisdom. If, however, this simple delineation of Scotish manners and scenery shall be able to lead back the memory of any wandering son of Scotland, to that olden time when some pastoral valley formed his little world, and when his most a-

bitious wish was to climb the neighbouring hill's top, I am confident that the highest aim of the writer will be accomplished;—for those pure and peaceful recollections cannot fail to meliorate the heart which they so delightfully engage.

In justice to the author, it ought to be mentioned, that the first half of this Tale was not only written, but *printed*, long before the animated historian of the race of Ivor had allured the romantic adventurer into a track, rich, original, and unexplored, and rendered a second journey all but hopeless. As it now appears, it relates wholly to another period of society; and its most striking characters and incidents are any thing but fictitious. That high-born and hard-fated woman, who was driven abroad in early life by the ruin of her family, and the misfortunes of her country, and who returned from France to an insular and solitary refuge among the humblest of that once powerful clan, whom her knowledge and her virtues long improved and blessed, is far indeed from being the portrait of fancy.

It is, I believe, part of the duty of an editor, to deprecate the severity of critics, and the harshness of cavillers, never doubting that such must exist; and by the usual pleas in arrest of judgment, namely, age, sex, inexperience, haste, a first offence, and so forth, to implore from the facility of good-nature, what cannot be yielded by the unmixed justice of good taste. It is a humiliating thing, after all, —even if it could be obtained,—to hold from courtesy that suffrage which is due only to desert; and I know that I shall best fulfil what is expected from me, by simply challenging for the Chief of Clan-Albin, that which every Highlander gives, and has therefore a right to demand,—

"*The equal combat of the Fingalians.*"

TO

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

The indulgence with which this National Tale has been received, gives the Author confidence to gratify her original wish, of inscribing it to one whose genius and virtues do so great honour to Scotland:—This she now does, with every sentiment of esteem and admiration.

24*th* May 1815.

CLAN-ALBIN,

A NATIONAL TALE.

CHAP. I.

No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier;
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned,
By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourned.

POPE.

In a dark and stormy night in November 17—, Ronald Macalbin, a Scotish Highlander, left the hamlet of L——, to cross the mountains to Glen-Albin, a solitary and remote valley in the Western Highlands.—In the person of Ronald were invested the various trades of Blacksmith, Farmer, Distiller, and Drover; and in the last capacity, he had just been attending a cattle fair, annually held at L——, as agent for the little community to which he belonged.

The leave of absence which Ronald had obtained from his wife was for one day; but at the fair he had met with many clansmen and

old friends, and his social propensities were of the most ardent kind. It was on the evening of the third day, that he reluctantly bent his way homeward, revolving some probable tale with which to appease the anticipated clamours of his help-mate. Like most of the procrastinating sons of mortality, Ronald had averted the evil day as long as possible. In the midst of his jollity, the idea of his wife had, indeed, intruded; but it still fled before the jests of Mr Wingate, *top-master* to an English drover, and the pipe of "Piper Hugh;" or was drowned amid the *quaighs* of Fairntosh with which he laboured to keep his spirits buoyant.

It was now when alone, and exposed to the fury of the tempest, that all the terrors of the reception he expected congregated in dismal array before him; and the thunder * which broke on the surrounding mountains, rolling in long deep peals through the glens, and flinging back on the stunned ear, in awful reverberation, seemed but a faint emblem of the more dreaded moral thunders which thirty years experience had taught Ronald to anticipate.

"Had she the heart of a Christian," thought Ronald, "let alone of a wife and namesake,

* In the West Highlands thunder is very common in win.

she could not scold to-night;"—and he rolled an additional wrapper round a fine plaid shawl which he had purchased at the fair as an offering of peace.

"Had she the soul of a Macalbin, she would pity me."—And the next suggestion of Ronald's fancy appeared so like high treason against the powers that were, that he feared to give it a local habitation in his mind, much more to embody it in words; for the laws recognized in his household, assimilating to those of the realm, made it death even to imagine evil of the supreme authority.

The tempest raged with increasing violence; and Ronald, leaving his track to the sagacity of his horse, continued to frame and reject a thousand plans for palliating his conduct, or averting its punishment, as he skirted the mountains.

"I will intreat old Moome to plead for me,"—he exclaimed at last; and, delighted with this idea, he was urging on his horse, when the animal suddenly stopped short, and refused to advance.—Ronald, who could have faced an opposing host of his own species with an unblanched cheek, and found courage in danger, felt all the national awe and dread of

beings of a superior nature. Now, it was well known to Ronald, that both horses and dogs can discover spirits invisible to human ken;—his wife had often assured him that his nocturnal rambles would tempt some supernatural visitant—he began to think his hour was come; and, in a voice that shook with terror, demanded, "if any one stopped the way." No answer was returned;—he again attempted to make his horse proceed, but the animal was rooted to the spot; and, to confirm his worst fears, the dog began to howl most piteously. Ronald, nearly distracted with terror, shouted in a louder tone, and, mingled with the echoes of his own words, fancied he distinguished the faint murmurs of a female voice. His courage instantly revived, and, heartily ashamed of his fears, he alighted, and leading his horse forward a few paces, discovered a female leaning on a cliff by the side of the path.

"'Tis a sad night," said Ronald in Gaelic, "Are you a stranger, or a countrywoman?—God help you! are you alone?" Ronald received no intelligible answer; and he repeated his observation and interrogatory in the best English he was master of.

"I am indeed alone," said the female in a feeble voice;—and Ronald inquired whether she was going.

"To the next hamlet," she replied; "is it still far distant?"

"To Dunalbin!"—exclaimed Ronald,—"then we shall go together; and if you can ride behind me, I give you a thousand welcomes."—In a tremulous voice the wandering female returned her thanks, but declined his offer.—Ronald would strip off his *slip-on*, and convert it into a pillion for her accommoda-tion;—this was likewise declined.—"If she would ride alone, he would lead forward the horse."—"I cannot indeed," said she earnestly; "when I have rested, I hope I shall be able to go on."

Half petted by her peremptory refusal, Ronald remounted, and slowly rode off.

"It is a pitiful night for any Christian soul to be out and alone in the middle of Glen-lenan," said Ronald, addressing his rough-coated steed; "and that a woman, a stranger too,—English, or Irish, or Lowland,—a soldier's wife, I warrant,—crossing the *countries*, poor thing, to Fort ——. Well, women are all alike positive. It will be three in the morning before she gets through the glen;—and

then a mighty likely thing that Mr. Daniel M'Pherson will open the *New Inns* to a soldier's wife;—and then the river to-night will be dreadfully swelled—the poor thing might be drowned."

These probabilities smote the simple, but humane heart of Ronald.—" I will return, and at least tell her of the stepping-stones," thought he; " perhaps she is come to reason, and I will bring her home. She might be afraid to meet me in that lone place—I will tell her whose husband I am."

Ronald, besides the courteous hospitality of the national, and the kindness of the individual character, had a third motive for pressing the stranger to accompany him to his home. He knew that his wife, to a violent temper, united a generous disposition; and that her anxiety to welcome and accommodate the stranger, would divert the displeasure his lengthened stay must have occasioned. He retraced his steps.

" I am returned," cried Ronald, as he again approached the wandering female, " to tell you that the stepping-stones are now removed to the pebbly shallow, where the old willow dips into the stream,—by ' the Cairn of the Hunter.' "

Ronald received no answer, but his ear caught a faint hollow moan, that seemed to announce the separation of body and spirit. He was instantly on his feet, and caught the unfortunate female in his arms, as she was sinking from an attempt to rise.

"Don't be afraid, poor soul," said the kind-hearted Highlander, in a voice which instinctively softened to the expression of sympathy and encouragement; "Don't be afraid of me, I shall take good care of you. —Don't you know that I am Ronald,—the smith's wife's husband?"——"Ronald's wife's husband" received no answer; but in a short time he learned that his wretched companion was seized with the pangs of child-birth.

"For the love of God, I pray thee, have me conveyed to the shelter of some roof, and to the care of some female; what a condition is mine!"—and she shuddered with the mingled agony of body and spirit.

Ronald placed her gently under the shelter of a projecting cliff, stripped off his upper garments, and wrapped them around her;—even the new shawl was put in requisition; for Ronald, forgetting that he was—"his wife's husband,"—only remembered that he was a r[illegible]

The trampling of the horse's feet was the usual signal for Ronald's wife to commence her cannonade; but when she saw her husband, instead of his customary slow and hesitating mode of entrance, furiously dashing open the wattled door, she blessed herself, and vowed the man had seen a spirit. The wild, raised, and haggard appearance of Ronald, confirmed this conjecture, till, in a few incoherent sentences, he explained his adventure in Glenlenan, and loudly called for blankets and dairy candles.—The "weeping blood of woman's heart," instantly warmed at the strange recital; and, while Ronald got ready a kind of sledge, which, in a country where roads are impassable to wheeled carriages, was used for carrying stones, she had made every arrangement for conveying the wandering stranger to Dunalbin.

"And God grant that she be alive," said Ronald's wife, as, attended by his daughter, he was about to set out; and Ronald, who fancied her voice never sounded so sweetly as when tuned to the note of pity, ventured to shake her hand while he repeated her wish.

"Is she young?" inquired Mary, the daughter of Ronald, as they hastened forward. —"I should think so," said Ronald, "she

soldier's wife, I warrant. Ah! Mary, you see what it is to be the wife of a soldier!"—"Poor thing!" sighed Mary, starting forward involuntarily—"A soldier's wife!"—and she darted away, unmindful that the dreary glen she entered was celebrated as the haunt of many a wayward ghost.

"She is gone!" cried Mary, as Ronald approached with his sledge,—"we are too late to save her!" and she wept and trembled while she gently supported the stranger in her arms. A low moan, which seemed the last effort of expiring nature, broke from the lips of the wandering female.—"She lives!"—cried Mary, with tremulous joy; and depositing her charge gently on the ground, she sprung into the sledge. Ronald placed the stranger in her arms.—"O drive softly, very softly, my father.—Think you, is she indeed the wife of a soldier?"

"She is a stranger at any rate," replied Ronald;—and the claim of a stranger is to a Highlander only secondary to the right of a kinsman.

Mary persevered in kind endeavours to impart vital warmth to the almost frozen frame of the wanderer, and to restore her to sensibility. A struggling sigh at times gave token of

returning animation, but a death-like stillness succeeding, would chill every hope. Mary listened with inbreathed expectation; and they reached Dunalbin.

The heart of Ronald beat cheerily when he viewed the fire of turf and brushwood, which his wife's humanity had heaped, blazing brightly in the centre of his hut. The good woman stepping to the door, bade them a cordial welcome; and Ronald lifted the stranger into the cottage, and, recommending her to the care of his wife, retreated to the cellar; for so is the second, or inner apartment of a Highland hut, where there happens to be a second, modestly named.

The clothes of the unfortunate stranger were drenched with rain. Mary undressed her, and they placed her in bed. She was made to swallow a small quantity of warmed milk, the only cordial the house afforded suitable to her condition, and in a short time she perceptibly recovered. Her languid eyes met the earnest gaze of Mary.—"May God reward thy care of an unfortunate," said she faintly. —Mary smiled, beckoned her to be still, and muttered a few words in Gaelic, which was her only language. The stranger understood not the exact meaning of these words; but

her heart comprehended nature's universal language. Mary's kindness was eloquent, and the wanderer returned her thanks with a languid, though grateful smile. Ronald entered the apartment on tip-toe.

"She is better," cried Mary smiling, and without waiting to be interrogated; "the soldier's poor wife is better."

"Now darling," said Ronald, whispering his wife,—"you see plain it was God himself put it in my heart to stay so long at the fair—this poor soul else would have perished in Glenlenan."—Ronald, who had kept his eye anxiously fixed on the face of his wife while he made this observation, did not venture to hazard another, but quietly followed her back to the cellar, where, now that the stranger no longer needed her attentions, she set out his supper of milk, cheese, and potatoes. If ever a genuine Highlander knew the vulgar sensations of hunger, thirst, cold, or fatigue, it is certain that he never complained of them. Ronald, who, cold, wet, and weary, had waited his wife's leisure with a patience which in his own eyes had no merit, made a hurried and spare repast, and stretched himself, still in his wet clothes, upon his humble pallet, that, on any sudden emergency, he might be ready to

obey the call of his wife, and administer to the comfort of the stranger.

Ronald had slept for some hours, and was actually dreaming of striking a bargain with Mr Wingate for the Dunalbin *shotts*[e] at an advance of half-a-crown a head, when he was awakened by the feeble cry of a new-born infant.

" To Himself be the praise," cried the pious Highlander; " now shall I go to the *New Inns* for a drop of wine to cherish her heart.—But if I could go to ' The Lady,'—across the lake is but a half mile, and she would get it sooner."—Ronald consulted his wife, who scoffed at the idea of disturbing " The Lady."

" Now, Ronald, you make me ashamed," said the indignant matron, " rather than go down the glen, and over the hill, and across the moor, you would be cruel enough to alarm your mistress."—Ronald had never felt his clannish pride more bitterly insulted, than by the insinuation, that to spare himself the fatigue and danger of exploring six miles of Highland road, over mountains and mosses, in a dark winter morning, he would willingly alarm " The Lady."—Few could feel how

loved, how revered, was that "Lady," by all who boasted the name of Macalbin!

"Now God forgive you, woman," said Ronald, his kindly feelings as much wounded as his clannish pride, "for sure and sure you know I would shed my blood a thousand and a thousand times, rather than alarm her dog, if it had not been for the sake of the stranger."—Ronald's wife was stung by a sense of her unkindness; but before she had time to apologize, he snatched up his brogues and his bonnet, and rushed from the house.

Before proceeding to the *New Inns*, he went to the door of a little hut, which stood in the centre of the hamlet, and awoke its ancient and solitary inhabitant.

Unah, whom youth and age alike loved and venerated, was the characteristic oracle of a genuine Highland hamlet,—a mother in Israel!—Four generations had she seen ushered into the theatre of existence,—she had beheld as many swept from its stage. In the chamber of sickness, sorrow, or death, her presence, her consolations, and her advice, were indispensibly requisite; and Ronald, as a matter of course, had resolved to awaken "Old Moome," (by which endearing appella-

tion she was universally known), when the stranger was brought home; but the multitudinous recollections of the fair had banished the thought, till it was recalled by the cry of the infant. Ever ready to obey the call of humanity, and to feel the sacred claim of that sacred character,—"The Stranger,"—Moome soon arose; and, followed by her little dog, hastened to Ronald's cottage, while he bent his steps to the *New Inns.*—And he succeeded in his embassy, though Mr Daniel M'Pherson, the proprietor of that great house, grumbled a good deal at having his rest broken by the wants of the *canaille* of Dunalbin. For he was a man of property and fashion; had been many years a waiter in one of the great hotels in Glasgow, and a long time butler to the gentleman to whom belonged the glen of Glen-albin. With his savings he had stocked an extensive sheep-farm, while its former numerous tenants, now on the banks of the Mohawk river, "languished for their native glen." To this he added a house of entertainment for the few travellers that chance brought to this remote district.

Ronald trudged home with his bottle of wine, regarding himself with that pleasing complacency which naturally springs from the

consciousness of having performed a deed of kindness.

"This is what will do her good," thought Ronald; "with a week's, or at most a fortnight's good nursing, she will be a-foot; and then I can give her and the little one a *cast* over C——: she will be able to walk the rest of the way; for I warrant she is used to march."

Ronald had assumed as a certain position, that the wandering female was the wife of a soldier, and going to Fort ——. Had any one at that moment undeceived him, it is probable he would have felt no inconsiderable disappointment; for it might have rendered useless the little arrangement his benevolence had formed, and just completed, as he entered his cottage.

"Here is what will strengthen her heart," said Ronald, as he held the bottle between him and the fire, admiring the rich colour of the potent elixir.—"Do, dear Moome, give her some," turning to the old woman, who sat by the fire, nursing the new-born babe. Ronald stooped to look at the child; the service he had done its mother, gave it a claim to his protection;—it was in some measure the creature of his benevolence. As Ronald

gazed, the mingled feelings of his kind heart became complicated beyond the simplicity of his understanding. He felt for the infant what he could neither comprehend nor explain.

"God bless the babe!—is it not a lovely boy now, Ronald?" said Moome.—"'Tis indeed a dainty rogue," replied the honest Highlander; "he will be a good soldier yet, if God spare him;" and he again urged Moome to administer the cordial.

"Och, and it is herself will surely die!" replied the old woman, speaking in a low tone, lest her words, though in a strange tongue, should be overheard by the unfortunate object of her compassion.

Ronald turned his eyes to the bed, where Mary sat watching the last emotions of nature in the convulsed frame of the wanderer. He strove to rally his spirits. The abrupt termination of the little scheme his kindness had formed for the relief of the young female, shocked him perhaps more than her actual sufferings. He could not reconcile himself to the idea of being deprived of an opportunity to do her good.

"We will, with your leave, drink her health, however," said Ronald; and from a chest he brought forth a case-bottle of—"Real

Fairntosh."—He presented his silver-hooped *quaich* first to Moome; for age and rank are alike venerable and sacred in the eyes of a Highlander;—and with devout energy did she bless the infant which slumbered in her lap, and with humble piety pray for the preservation of the life of the mother. A species of devotion mingles with the social orgies of the Highlanders, who, over the national beverage, will invoke with hallowed awe the memory of the dead, or with fervour implore blessings on the living.

Ronald was in the attitude of bowing to old Unah as she returned the *quaich*, when Mary beckoned her to bring forward the child; and she supported the sufferer, while Moome gave the infant to her feeble embrace. The powerful energies of nature lent momentary strength to her enfeebled frame, as she clasped the little babe to her bosom with all a mother's clinging fondness. The big drops of her speechless agony fell on its innocent face, while she kissed the babe, thus baptized in the tears of its mother's misery. It was the last effort of expiring nature! Moome caught the infant as it was falling from her arms. She sunk back on the pillow, her dim eye still fixed on the child. With trembling anxiety did Mary watch the

ebb and flow of the pulse she touched. It alternately lessened, quivered, stopped, and again fluttered against the pressure of her finger. Ronald saw its movements in the countenance of his daughter. It again lessened, fluttered, and stopped;—Mary became pale;—a sigh, rather felt than heard, quivered on the lips of the wanderer!—

"She is gone to God!"—said Moome, in the emphatic language of her country.

Mary continued to support the lifeless form of the stranger, while Ronald, his wife, and old Moome, as they encircled the bed, gazed on in silent pity. For some minutes this interesting silence was preserved inviolate,—their spirits bowed before the awful majesty of death!

The combined emotions of sorrow and terror held their feelings in painful concentration, till Mary, gently disengaging her arm, folded down the eyelids of the departed. It is a simple duty, but how powerfully can it awaken all those sympathies which link together beings of a common destiny!

"God knoweth who may perform this office for me," said Mary. It was an appeal to every heart;—the little group sat down by the bedside; and the women wept together.

A stream of light from the candle which Ronald held, played full on the face of the departed.—"How pale!—how lovely!"—exclaimed Mary, earnestly gazing on the corpse.

"What will become of her little orphan?" said Moome. Mary had forgotten the child. She stretched out her arms to receive him.

"Poor little fellow," cried she, as she folded him to her kind heart, "what will become of thee?" She looked to her mother; but the good woman made no answer.

"We will take care of him, to be sure," cried Ronald firmly; for he felt the full force of Mary's imploring glance; "perhaps we may find his father; but, at any rate, it is no great matter bringing up a boy,—what signify his few potatoes more or less?—if it were a girl indeed, that would be a different story; but since God has sent him to us, it must be for good."—Mary's eyes sparkled with joy.

"How fortunate!" cried she; "Allan's sister, whose child died yesterday, will be so happy to suckle him;—we will nurse him between us, dear Moome,—he will soon run about, and trouble nobody."—She bent downward, and fondly kissed the little object of her solicitude.

It was still some hours from day; and they

performed the last sad offices to the dead.—Mary cut off a ringlet from the soft redundance of fair hair which hung over her shoulders.—"I will keep it for her little orphan," said she, as she placed it in her bosom.

They next examined the little packet she had brought, to see if it afforded any clew to her story. It consisted of two or three articles of apparel, and a small quantity of baby linen, all of such texture and quality as denoted the condition of their possessor to be much superior to that of a soldier's wife. On searching her pockets, they found a small case, which contained the miniature resemblance of a gentleman, dressed in a military uniform, and of uncommonly handsome appearance, who seemed about thirty years of age. Besides that, there was nothing save a few shillings, and a large embroidered pin-cushion, such as used to be made by the inhabitants of religious houses on the continent. Mary deposited these articles in a place of security.

They were now at leisure, and sufficiently composed to examine the figure of the deceased.—"She might be about twenty-five years," said Moome. Ronald thought that impossible. Though slender, she was elegantly shaped; her complexion was singularly delicate; and even

in death her countenance exhibited all those meekened charms that characterize a Madona.

"Oh! Moome, the saint-like smile which hovers on that pale face!" cried Mary.

"She has thrown off earthly cares!—She is gone to eternal rest!—Her spirit is with God!"—said Moome.

"It is impossible that she could have been the wife of a soldier," sighed Mary.—That delusion had existed while it was necessary: it had called forth all the latent sympathies of Mary's heart.

"Och! and I'll be sworn it was herself was the lady every inch of her, poor soul!—Look to that soft hand," said Moome. "And that gentleman in the picture is her husband, no doubt,—God help him, and teach him to bear his sorrows!" continued Moome, while she put on her spectacles to examine the picture. Unah gazed upon it, till her imagination, associating all that was lovely with a dear loved Dalt *, long since gathered to his fathers,

* DALT, a foster-child. The custom of fosterage still subsists in the Isles, and some parts of the Highlands, in primitive force. By the lower classes it is clung to with undecaying zeal. It promotes their interest, flatters their pride, and forms the bond of a very endearing connexion between the poor and the rich.

caught fire; and she persuaded herself that it bore a strong resemblance to "Donald Dunalbin, whom it had pleased HIM to take to himself, many and many was the year since."

Instead of adding the sirname to the Christian name of the sons of great families in the Highlands, the title is added, to distinguish them from the rest of the clan. There was many a Donald Macalbin, but there was but one Donald Dunalbin, the second son of Sir Norman Macalbin; and he had been the beloved Dalt of Moome, fifty years previous to this period.

Ronald and his wife, at the intreaty of Moome, now retired to rest: Mary heaped the fire with fresh turf; and they quietly took their stations to watch the corpse, and nurse the infant, unwilling to alarm their neighbours till the day should dawn.

CHAP. II.

"——————————By night,
The village matron, round the blazing hearth,
Suspends the infant audience with her tales
Breathing astonishment! Of witching rhymes
And evil spirits. * * * *
At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
Gazing each other, speechless, and congealed
With shiv'ring sighs; till, eager for the event,
Around the beldam all erect they hang,
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quelled."

AKENSIDE.

"WELL did I know," said Moome, "that an interment was coming to Dunalbin;—all last night did my little *Cassore* bark and howl;—no doubt he was looking at it then. And was it not these eyes saw the corpse-lights go from this house to the burying-ground itself? Och! and that is a sign I never saw fail; and well did I know it was she would die, poor lady! Now, Mary, while your mother was in the cellar, and you at the peat-stack, two birds, so white and beautiful, hovered round the bed. In a twinkle they were gone;—and was not

that the warning spirits of the stranger and her child?"

"He shall not die!" cried Mary, whom these funeral bodings alarmed; and involuntarily she clasped the fondling to her bosom.

"Nay, God forbid!" cried Moome; "but it was very natural for the spirit of the child to company with the spirit of the mother." Mary readily allowed the propriety of this.—Moome knew that Highland children, especially before they are christened, are very liable to be either stolen, or changed by fairies; nay, for that matter, Lowland children were, till lately, in the same situation: but she possessed a charm against the evil designs of the fairy people, and, resolving to make sure work, immediately used it in behalf of the sleeping orphan.

"God will guard him," said Moome, as she laid down her bible, and put aside the *madder* of charmed water with which she had sprinkled the infant; and, seating herself, she began to entertain her youthful auditor with many a marvellous and awe-inspiring tale of ghosts, wraiths, warnings, dreams, second-sight, second-hearing, &c. &c. For nearly eighty years Moome had been familiar with these supernatural appearances, and she now spoke of them

with all the calmness of philosophy. No one could have a firmer conviction of every thing that favours superstitious belief; but as no man is a hero to his valet, no ghost was an object of intimidation to Moome; and she descanted with calm seriousness, while Mary sat shivering with horror.

"It was in the year Macalbin went to France," said Moome, beginning to relate a story of the second-sight, or more properly third-sight, which she solemnly vouched for truth, "just two days before All-hallow-eve; well can I remember it, and great reason I have;—for sure enough it was that very Hallow-eve I first knew Roban was to be mine; whom I saw as plain as I now do you, Mary, as I knitted the knots, * and his face turned to me full; however, that is not my story.—A rainy

* This *charm* is more commonly practised in Ireland than in Scotland. The maiden who peeps into futurity, as she knits the knots, repeats,

"I knit this knot, this knot I knit,
To see the sight I ne'er saw yet;
To see my true-love in his best array,
Or in clothes that he wears every day;
And if his livery I'm to wear,
And if his children I'm to bear,
Blithe and merry may he be,
And may his face be turn'd to me."

season it had been, but that night was fair and beautiful; and by the moonlight we went to cut down some barley. Well, we worked, and sung, and strove, the pipe cheering us all the while; my own uncle, 'Farquhar-*gorm*,' was piper then, the present Hugh's grandfather. Well, what should we see but a man running down the hill in his shirt and philabeg, with a handkerchief tied round him, as a runner would have in those days. We guessed he came with *news*, and bad news sure enough they were; for old Donald-bane, at ——, was dying; and he came to see if Rory Calgary would go see him. Now Rory, who had learned the doctoring, was to be sure a darling;—besides, Donald-bane was a *Calt* * of his mother's.—'I will go indeed,' says he, 'were it twice farther;' and a lad ran to the hill to catch him a horse. But before he arrived, poor Donald was speechless, though he still knew him, and grasped him by the hand as if he grappled for the bare life. Donald's children were all present; some of them, grown up and married off the house, were come from a distance to console his last moments, and to receive his bless-

* Cho-alt, a connexion by fosterage, which includes the whole race of the nurse.

ing. His poor old woman sat behind him in the bed, supporting his head on her knees. They had lived together forty years, and loved each other too, Mary. Young Rory, who was tender-hearted, could not help shedding tears as poor Donald-bane clung to him;—besides, Donald was his mother's *Cho-alt*, you know. Well, in a few minutes he breathed his last,—and his daughter threw the plaid over him.

"Rory could be of no more use to poor Donald, and his presence was a restraint to the grief of the family; so they gave him a blanket, and he went to lean in the cellar till morning. But Rory's warm heart would not let him sleep; for he heard Donald's children weeping, and his wife mourning, as she still sat in the bed. She at last began to speak, and he listened to her words:—

"'You are now lying there in corpse, Donald, my husband,' said she, 'and forty years ago, ere I knew you, or thought of you, I saw you thus!'—Oh! Mary, and it was no time for telling lies, when the spirit of Donald was just gone forth! 'I was then a young girl,' said she to the children, 'and had no thought of your father, for another sought me for his wife. I foolishly intreated old Morag-crotach to show

me my fortune. It was evening, and we went to the banks of the lone stream.* She made me place my foot on her's;—she held my hands within her own, and her spirit came upon me;—I saw with her eyes. I saw you, Donald, my husband!—who now lie on my knees a corpse,—I saw you cross that stream, followed by our four children. In your arms you carried the two I have born dead!—I had heard of Donald-bane: he often went to Ireland, and round among the isles, with his boat, and was often in danger; and I asked Morag if he would be drowned.—'No!' said she, 'No; Donald will die at home.'—My Donald has indeed 'died at home!'—and the poor woman wept more bitterly.

"'I am sure my father knew he never would be drowned;' said Donald's eldest son, 'for well do I remember one night that we were in the Sound of Jura. It blew loud and wildly;

* In this manner seers impart a portion of their gift. Probably something of this kind is meant, when the RHYMER is said to have showed Corspatrick the death of King Alexander, when,—

> "He put his hand on the Earlie's head,
> And showed him a rock beside the sea,
> Where a king lay stiff beneath his steed,
> And steel-dight nobles wiped their e'e."

the sea rolled with a heavy swell, and we saw neither moon nor star, but heard the dreadful roar of Corywrekan. My brother and I were much alarmed; but my father told us not to fear, he would never be drowned. So we took courage, and ran in for Blackmull's Bay. We saw he *knew* something, though we dared not question him.'

"Donald's family continued to talk over these circumstances all night. They were all alone, the widow and her children. When morning dawned, Rory took leave. He was a light-hearted young man, and in the Lowlands had learned to laugh at our stories; but he said, 'If ever there was a true tale of second-sight, it was that of Donald-bane's wife, who apostrophized the newly departed spirit of her husband.'" *

During this relation, Mary had often hitched her stool (formed of twisted bent) nearer to Moome; who continued to add tale to tale,

* Note. Among a thousand tales of second-sight, the writer of these pages has chosen that above detailed; because it affords a tolerable specimen, and is of recent occurrence. *Donald-bane* was, a few years since, a ferry-man between Mull and Ulva, exactly on the route of fashionable tourists; and it is probable that his widow, the heroine of this story, still resides there. In relating her story, her own words have been translated.

with the garrulity peculiar to her age, and to her character; for Moome was doubly endowed with the gift of story-telling—it is the failing of age, and was likewise the weakness of Moome.

"Hark!" cried Mary, during a pause in the conversation, "Heard you not a noise over-head?"

"No, my dear," replied Moome coolly, "but I am old and deaf;—it would only be the boards cracking, of which your father will make the stranger's coffin; that always happens."—There were several boards laid across the rafters of Ronald's cottage, to be ready on any emergency; and in the meanwhile, they formed a kind of rude cieling, which gave the hut an air of snugness and comfort, superior to most Highland dwellings.

CHAP. III.

"I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate; and the voice of the people is heard no more. The thistle shook there its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the window, the rank grass of the wall waved round his head. Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, and silence is in the hall of her fathers."

OSSIAN.

DAY was now dawning, and Ronald's wife arose, which interrupted Moome's tales; but she promised to renew them on the following night; and Mary retired, leaving the orphan to her care.

The inhabitants of Dunalbin were still ignorant of the addition the last night had made to their little society; but the news spread apace, and Ronald's cottage was soon filled by a group, which pity, curiosity, and a variety of motives, had drawn together.—Moome, who was the village orator, had related the story for the tenth time, when Ronald proposed to go to "The Island," and take the advice of "The Lady," in his future arrangements.

Lady AUGUSTA MACALBIN was the last of her race. Like a column in the melancholy waste, she stood, in solitary majesty, pointing out the spot where feudal greatness had risen, and flourished, and faded. She was the only living descendant of Sir Norman Macalbin, once hereditary proprietor of an extensive tract of country, stretching out on every side from Glenalbin, far as the eye could scan. He had been the chief of a powerful clan; but attachment to the ancient line of Scotish kings, and the profusion of his age, had estranged his property: and his princely domain now increased the accumulating fortunes of a newer family. Lady Augusta was an only daughter. She had seen seven gallant brothers descend to the grave before her; and now stood alone and unsubdued amid the wrecks of time. Her life, lengthened out beyond the usual span of human existence, had been loaded with more than the customary portion of human misfortune; and she had lived to weep all those transitory blessings, which, in possession, seldom bestow enjoyment.—Her figure, which rose to the majestic, was still erect, and unbroken as that mind, whose energies had risen superior to the reiterated crush of misfortune, and resisted the

continual pressure of adversity. Time, which had stolen the rose from her cheeks, and silvered her dark locks, had neither dimmed the lustre of her full-orbed eye, nor furrowed that ample forehead, which still seemed the polished image of a strong and noble mind. The beauty which in early life shone conspicuous in Lady Augusta, was impressive and commanding; she seemed destined to sustain the tottering honours of her race; but she was now chiefly distinguished by a benignity of countenance, and kindness of manner, which spoke a language of love and indulgence to all mankind;—she was destined to raise the veneration still felt for the name of Macalbin, to a species of adoration; and, by her single virtues, to keep in remembrance the long fallen honours of her family.

Many years before this period, the Lady had returned from France, and fixed her lonely residence among the poor, nominal retainers of her ancestors. Embosomed in the solitude of the mountains, she appeared to them the embodied spirit of benevolence and feudal kindness. Her virtues, her misfortunes, and her rank, in a country where almost idolatrous respect is paid to hereditary greatness, had thrown a mysterious veil around her, which

curiosity never ventured to withdraw. Her griefs were sacred to herself: they belonged to another age, and to another class of beings. Never had the sanctity of her sorrows been profaned by mortal tongue;—she leaned upon her own mighty spirit, and its strength seemed able to sustain that weight of misfortune which sixty years had accumulated. Her smiles, her courtesies, her kindnesses, and her benedictions, were given to her people; —if she ever complained, it was to the wilds of Eleenalin!—if she ever wept, it was in the solitude she loved!

It was whispered, that, in early life, Lady Augusta had been married to a gentleman of France; but no one knew, and no one ventured to overstep, the mysterious circle misfortune had drawn around her. Indeed, this very mystery served to enhance the reverence universally felt for "The Lady," (for in the glen this was her emphatic name); and it was thought that its elucidation, as well as its concealment, must have concurred to do honour to the most exalted of human beings.

Such was "The Lady," to whom Ronald hastened. It may now be proper to introduce our readers to the remote region which her presence embellished.

Glenalbin is about five miles in length, and hardly one in breadth; it is situated in one of the most remote districts of the West Highlands, and encircled by some of the loftiest and most rugged of the Caledonian mountains. Rich in all the characteristic scenery of a romantic country, it cannot be described as merely beautiful, or merely sublime; but from a felicitous combination of picturesque beauty, wonderful magnificence, and gloomy grandeur, often bordering on horror, results a whole which seems the favourite finishing of nature; a chosen spot where she has compiled all her charms.

On the north side of the glen is seen a lofty range of mountains, gradually sloping towards a beautiful lake, which, like an embossed mirror, gleams at their base. Its opposite side is skirted by a ridge of precipitous cliffs. Starting boldly from the lake, athwart which they often throw a lurid shade, they are seen grouped in every grotesque form, the favourite and unmolested haunt of numerous birds of prey. Beyond these, and rising from them by a gentle swell, ridge above ridge, the summit of one range forming the base of another, tower the softer hills of Kenanowen, now fading in the haze of distance, and now brought

near to the eye by the thin mists which enveloped their aerial tops, or rolled along their dark sides, like the broken billows of a stormy ocean.

The verbal delineation of external nature seldom conveys a very lively, and still more seldom a very faithful, image of the objects described. It were vain to paint Glenalbin! —which exhibits combinations of terrific grandeur, and gloomy sublimity, from which the eagle-genius of Salvator might have caught bolder images, and a loftier tone of conception. The effect of these is powerfully heightened, when contrasted with the soft and endearing charms exclusively appropriated to the scenery of the Scotish glens. The clear lake, gracefully retiring in little bays, and sprinkled with wooded islets; the shrubby slope, connecting the mountain with the plain; the rustic mead which the ploughshare had never violated; the mossy rill, creeping unseen beneath tangling thickets, and betrayed only by their verdure; and the Alpine torrent, dashing furiously from cliff to cliff, and tracing its impetuous course down the mountains, by a sweeping line of silver foam. On every side may also be seen many an irregular acclivity, and many a "bosky

cleugh," hung with the shaggy underwood peculiar to the country. The dwarf-oak, the holly, the trembling poplar, and the weeping birch, sighing and breathing fragrance, adorn the inferior range of hills, while the mountain-ash, its resplendent berries glowing amid its light foliage, drops from every rifted rock. On the steep banks of the mountain streams, and impending over their channels, hang the alder, the hazel, the wild-guin, and white thorn; garlanded with the briar-rose, the woodbine, and all those beautiful climbers which the hand of Nature has woven around them, in gay and luxuriant festoons:—for here she may be still viewed in her original state,—joyous, smiling, liberal, and sportive;—unmolested by the trappings of art, and unconfined by the robes of ceremony, she unfolds her native charms, and defies every attempt to improve her "wildly rustic graces."

But the soul which animated this wild scene,—the point from which its interest diverged, was the straggling hamlet of Dunalbin;—its blue smoke slowly rising among the old elms, under whose shade many successive generations had reposed; its fairy group of infant inha-

bitants; its domestic animals browsing on the ferny *braes*; the natural, though rude disposition of its little domiciles,—all announcing its claim to antiquity, and undecayed simplicity of manners. At the eastern extremity of the glen, where the lake narrows in a fine sweep, are seen the turrets of Dunalbin castle. Surrounded by groves of oak, which seem coeval with the Druids, and frowning in desolation, it overhangs the waters of the lake, its mouldering grandeur conveying to the mind a fine image of the fallen fortunes of those who for ages had been its proud possessors.

Besides the hamlet of Dunalbin, many clusters of warm and sheltered huts were sprinkled over this once populous glen;—now nestling amid thick copses, and now under the shadow of some friendly rock. But Dunalbin was the capital of the vale; for there stood Ronald's smithy, a corn-mill, and a little house where humble lore was taught, and sermon occasionally heard: for in the Highland parishes, of such extent, the minister often preaches at different places. This shelter was, however, only sought in inclement weather; for, when the sun shone bright and warm over all that little glen, the good pastor would meet his hill-side flock on a daisied slope before the school-house,

—the loved scene of many an infant revel. And sweet was the hymn of praise ascending from that hill-side flock, which came, in a still morning, floating over the lake to the delighted ears of "The Lady."

It was in an island, near the centre of the lake, that Lady Augusta had fixed her residence. *Eleenalin*, literally "the beautiful island," had been, from time immemorial, the burying-place of the Chiefs of Clan-Albin; and her humble friends regarded her proposal, of living among the spirits of her ancestors, as something bordering at once on madness and presumption. Often at midnight had dreadful screams been heard to issue from the island, and often had a pale blue light been seen playing there, amid surrounding darkness.—Lady Augusta had now lived in Eleenalin undisturbed for upwards of thirty years. Indeed, her presence seemed to have banished all its supernatural inhabitants; no sound was now heard, save the wind howling amid the cliffs; nor was any light seen, save the twinkling of a solitary lamp, which, streaming from the cottage of the Lady, shed its fairy ray on the still waters of the lake.

This lovely islet, of scarce half a mile in circumference, was an epitome of all the

beauties of the glen. It boasted its little eminence, and its tinkling streamlet; its tiny *lochan*, its abrupt cliff, and its flowery sheltered nook.—It was in one of these, surrounded on all sides by copses and cliffs, and only open to a small bay, that "The Lady" had reared her home. Never was any spot more fitted to inspire the delightful home-feeling, peculiar to confined scenery, than this sweet recess. Yet it commanded a view of the hamlet,—of human beings,—their affections, their enjoyments, and their occupations; without which the loveliest scenes of nature exhibit but a cheerless void.

This little solitary home was inexpressibly dear to Lady Augusta,—it was the scene of her unshared sorrows. Here she spent a life of piety and benevolence, and here she hoped to find a peaceful grave.—Seldom did she quit her little kingdom, though she received daily visits from the hamlet, which was at the distance of less than a quarter of a mile across the lake.

CHAP. IV.

> "The lonely dwellers in the glens and moors,
> Their habitations, and their little joys."
>
> GRAHAME.

It was still early when Ronald reached Eleenalin. The Lady had just risen; and as he related his adventure, standing bonnet in hand, pity and wonder alternately predominated in her expressive countenance. "It is, indeed, a very strange circumstance," said Lady Augusta; "and is there nothing which may lead to a discovery of her friends?"—She inquired still more particularly, but Ronald had already told all that he knew. She begged him to be seated, while he described the appearance of the unfortunate stranger.

This was an honour which Ronald positively declined. Women of all ranks in the Highlands associate together with kindness and familiarity;—but for a *commoner*—a man, to sit

down in presence of his Lady;—Ronald begged to be excused, he better knew his distance. He, however, described the stranger as "very pale, and in very *low order*, with a very *small bone*, but *good hair*;" whom Mary called beautiful, but whom Ronald thought not very happy in point of looks; though he owned that she was "very like a gentlewoman."

The Lady was accustomed to hear Ronald, and his compatriots, employ the same phrases in describing a fine woman and a fine cow; and though she perhaps did not place quite so much merit in a *large bone*, and *high order*, she seldom dissented from the general opinion. After a pause of some minutes, during which she seemed to take no cognizance of any surrounding object, she arose, and wrapping herself in a Highland cloak, bade Ronald lead the way to the shore.—"Alone, a stranger, friendless!"—said the Lady, in a tone which evinced a deep and intimate sympathy with the condition of the wandering female.

"Still the good girl I ever knew," said Lady Augusta, addressing Mary, who sat nursing the little orphan. Mary rose blushing, and humbly curtsied her thanks.

The Lady almost started back as she viewed the corpse of the hapless stranger. Many pain-

ful associations seemed to crowd to her mind; and she, who never wept her own sorrows, shed a generous tear over the woes of another. —The trifling articles found on the deceased, were next submitted to her inspection. On the picture she gazed almost as earnestly as Moome had done; and Mary, unseen, kissed off the warm tear which had fallen on the glass,—for never did Catholic adore his tutelary saint with more intense devotion, than Mary worshipped the Lady.

A nurse had been provided for the orphan, the sister of that Allan whom Mary had mentioned on the preceding night. Allan was the lover of Mary; but many years before this, he had been called out by his *Laird* as a soldier, with the alternative of seeing an aged father, a widowed sister, and her infant children, dispossessed of the little patch of land from which they derived a scanty subsistence, and thrown on an unknown, unfriendly world. Love and duty strove for mastery in the heart of Allan; but he was now a soldier in America. The father of Allan lived in another *country;* that is, beyond a ridge of stupendous mountains, which, in the Highlands, are the boundaries of what are called countries: but he had a sister married in Dunalbin, who had taken the

orphan to her bosom. She was very poor, but Mary was as generous as gentle; and her heart still kept the promise she had made to her absent lover.

The hamlet of Dunalbin contained about thirty families, who rented the north side of the glen, and a considerable tract of hill country for summer grazing, and the pasture of a few sheep. It was one of those conjunct farms so common in the Highlands before the introduction of sheep-farming, and of which some lingering instances yet remain. Its produce "just gave what life required," to upwards of 180 souls, all living together as one great family, all connected by blood or marriage,—by a common name, a common origin, and a common head,——the CHIEF of the CLAN. That clan had now no chief!—but memory, clinging to all that had once been their pride, their grace, and their glory, feelingly supplied that want. This little remnant of Macalbin's clan were united by similarity of pursuit, of condition, of hopes, of enjoyments, of recollections, and of sufferings,—by every affection that endears, and by every bond which links society in harmonious union. A Highland *bhalie*, such as it then existed, afforded an object of more pleasing contemplation to a mind of sensibility,

than the flocks of a thousand hills. The simple and unaccommodated lives of the inhabitants, their romantic virtues, and enthusiastic attachment to the Chief and the Clan; every pleasing peculiarity of national manners, which then marked them a distinct people,—a race which society in its progress seemed to have forgotten,—undebased by its corruptions, unimpressed by its usages, still bearing the lofty character of heroic times,—all combined to seize the imagination, and to interest the heart through its powerful medium.

It might, indeed, have been easy to find a people who practised a more improved mode of agriculture, who better understood the qualities of soil, and the uses of manure, and who could avail themselves of local advantages with skill infinitely superior. But, for purity of manners, warmth of affections, kindness, and courtesy, —for every social virtue, and fire-side endearment,—for that untutored elegance of sentiment, and that love of music and song, which embellish all these, even in the lowest condition—No! it was impossible!—The last of the clan were a chosen people, with whom peace and love took refuge.

And the cow of the fatherless and the widow was in the *fold* of the *bhalie*;—Moome's cow

was there; and her little flock, rent-free, ranged the hills of Glenalbin. And what Moome received from generosity, she bestowed in kindness; for, with the wool of that little flock, and a distaff, which, though it performed little, never was idle, Moome could clothe the orphan and the poor. If "Macalbin's blood" warmed their veins, so much the better; for though Moome's charity did not end with the *clan*, it certainly began there.

Besides a share of this social establishment, which Ronald held in right of his wife, he rented a *croft* in another part of the glen, and was what is termed a "small tenant." He was likewise the blacksmith; and this trade had been hereditary in his family, from those lamented days when the head of every bullock and cow, slaughtered for the chief, was the blacksmith's perquisite. Few heads now for Ronald!—but still his situation was comfortable, compared with the lot of his neighbours. And he was as generous as rich; for Ronald now informed the Lady—"that he had got a *cask;*" no Highlander thinks it necessary to add —'of whisky;' "that his wife would have every thing *decent:* that some of the women would sit up all night to help her to bake oatcakes; that all the neighbours in the glen had

sent fowls and cheeses; that he had looked out a piece of wood for the coffin; and, finally, that he would send his horse for the Minister, who would ride over on the following day, which, with the Lady's leave, he wished to fix for the *interment* of the stranger, and the baptism of her child."

The Lady bowed in token of approbation, and afterwards added, "You shall carry the corpse of the stranger to Eleenalin. 'Tis not fit, Ronald, that her ashes should mingle with strangers. Should her friends ever inquire after her, we may point out where she is laid. Mary may yet lead that infant to weep at the grave of his mother. There is the green knoll, called *Kilechan*, (the cell, or grave of Hector), where moulders the dust of the unfortunate lover of the Lady Malbina, my remote ancestor. There he was surprised, when asleep, by the barbarous vigilance of her haughty brothers; but I have no spirits for that bloody catastrophe. Sacred be the last asylum of unfortunate love!" The Lady raised her speaking eyes, and for a moment was silent. She then resumed,—"That favourite spot shall be sacred to this lady and her misfortunes." These were sentiments dear to Highland pride, and Highland tenderness. A grave among the graves of their ancestors,

was perhaps the only thing the people of the glen would have grudged to the *stranger;* and that she should suffer, what to their feelings appeared the worst, as it is the most irremediable of evils,—separation in death from her kindred,—that she should *sleep with strangers,*—was most afflicting to their prejudices and their tenderness; and Ronald, with a bow more humble than low, spoke his sense of this unlooked-for goodness.

The Lady then took leave, and went from hut to hut throughout the hamlet, visiting that little flock which now engrossed all of affection that the grave had not swallowed up,—all of care that she felt for any thing of this earth.

CHAP. V.

> "And we—behind the Chieftain's shield,
> No more shall we in safety dwell,
> None lead the people to the field,
> And we the loud lament must swell,
> *Och hone a righ, Och hone a righ,*
> The pride of ALBIN's line is o'er."
>
> SCOTT.

NOWISE fatigued by previous exertion, or rather strong in her wish to oblige, Moome, on the succeeding night, again offered to watch by the corpse of the stranger; and Mary, who loved her for her virtues, and adored her for her traditionary lore, gladly accepted this offer.

Several girls likewise joined in this kindly meant attention to the dead; and with many a tale did Moome amuse their vigil. On that night, Mary's soft nature wept over the mountain-hunter who now slumbered in Kilechan; although his venerable historian frequently re-

minded her that he was chief of a clan who had always been enemies to '*our clan*,' and that, to avenge his murder, his *clan* had put to death two of Macalbin's sons, and their followers, whom they had surprised on a hunting excursion.—Towards morning, the young women went to their homes, and Mary was left alone with her friend.

"Now do, dear Moome," said she, "that we are all alone, tell me about how you met the *Green Lady* at the head of the glen, who told you all that should ever happen to the clan.—I once heard my mother tell it, but I should like dearly to have it from your own lips."—Mary had sat spell-bound during the night, eagerly listening to what she dreaded to hear, the strange delight of terror thrilling her soul, and absorbing all her faculties. Often had she listened to the same tales; but she was now in the chamber of death, and every awful event breathed deeper horror.—"Now do, dear Moome, tell me!" Moome assumed a look of gravity and importance.

"You are still too young for that, Mary."

"But (by your leave) I may never have such an opportunity," replied Mary; "and I shall be so silent." And she held her breath in fearful expectation; for hearing the story from

one who had communed with the spirit, seemed nearly as awful as meeting it in person.

"Well, Mary, I know you are a wise girl and a good; and sure enough, that is what concerns you as much as myself, and all that are called Macalbin; so, if you promise to be discreet—" Mary readily promised; and Moome commenced that narrative in which she felt a solemn pride, and regarded as the most important event of her life, always excepting nursing Donald Dunalbin.

"It was ten years after I married Roban Macalbin," said Moome. "Roban's father had been *Gillie-casflue* * to the old Laird, and Roban was always about the castle, where I also, happy time! was nurse to Lady Augusta, —a child she was then. So, when we married, there being no place for us at the time, Macalbin gave us a croft off his own farm, Bruachrua it was, and a shealing at Glentannar with the other tenants. Well, it was about midsummer, and as I had to go to the moss, I got up very early, to have the milking over; besides, the weather was hot, and towards noon the cattle became restive. Och! Mary, be-

* That person of a Chieftain's body-guard, whose business it was to carry him over fords.

lieve me now, the weather is no more like what it was in my young days, than old times are to the new. It was a lovely, serene morning; the sun was not yet up, and the mist was low on the hill. Och! well can I remember it!—Well, stepping through the Bruar, what should I do but miss my beads? Look at them, Mary, they are *real amber*."—Mary had seen them every day in her life; but she courteously examined them, and complimented Moome on their possession.

"Beautiful they are, sure enough," replied Moome.—"The very day I took home my Donald, my darling Dalt, to the castle, did the dear Lady that was, present them to me from her own neck. Just eight years he then was, and such a boy! O Mary! you never saw the boy could match him, dressed as he was that day in new tartans of my own spinning; for sure enough, I was a namely *web-maker* in my own time." Mary had also heard this history of the beads a hundred times, but Highland courtesy restrained her impatience, and Moome resumed.

"Well, when I came home, Roban was still asleep, and I was loath to wake him, though he should have been up at Macalbin's peats long before that. So I just stooped down,

and kissed poor Roban, (for I was young then), thinking if he awoke it was good, and if not, I would let him sleep. I found my beads, and hastened to my cattle. And a namely *fold* Roban had for a commoner; five *tidy* * *cows*, besides other cows, and their followers, and sheep on the hills, all for ten shillings *Saxon money*, Roban's few services at the peats, and such as that, and some duty fowls from myself, and a few *hanks* of yarn. And to be sure the Lady would say, 'I can know Unah Bruachrua's yarn from all the women's in the glen.'—These were her own words, dear Lady! God give her soul its peace! and forbid that I should take pride to myself for my spinning; for no doubt many a Macalbin woman span better than I, though she would say so, dear Lady; and God forbid, Mary, that I should belie the dead.—Well, as I was saying of Roban's *fold*,—but you will notice, Mary, there was no sheep-farms in those days, —I was hastening on, gazing round me at our master's castle, and all our cattle, and the

* Milch cows. Besides the stated services to the Laird, and the rent, whether paid in money or in kind, the Lady has her claim on the wife of the tenant, called "The Wife's Portion," or due, consisting of fowls, butter, yarn, &c. and attendance at *graddaning*, waulking, &c.

smoking cottages of our own clan; and praising HIMSELF for all his goodness, for at that moment my own heart felt it, and was full of it;—when all at once, what should I see coming slowly towards me, just down from *Tobermora*, (the well or spring of the Virgin), but a lady so tall! so lovely!—Guess yourself if I was not in the terrors.—She was dressed in green; a white *tunag** flowed from her shoulders, which was fastened by a gold broach; and her fine yellow hair—such hair!—hung around her. I had not recovered my terror, when she asked my *news*. Trembling like an aspen leaf, I said I had none strange.

" 'Were any one to ask me for *news*, I could tell what would seem strange,' said she.—Think yourself, Mary, how I trembled, 'meeting a lady in such a place, who did not belong to the *family*.

" 'Don't fear me, woman,' said she; 'ask my news; I am not at liberty to speak unquestioned.'—It was then I was sure she was a spirit. All the while she stood, her starry eyes

* TUNAG, a short mantle, still worn by old women in some parts of the Highlands. The *plaid* is only worn in full dress, but the *tunag* by way of shawl. In the distant isles, this piece of dress is called *Guilechan*.

fixed upon me, and her arm wrapped in her *tunag*.

"My God preserve me! cried I, almost fainting with terror.

"'Perhaps I adore that Being as much as you do,' said she; 'ask me for news.' Seeing she was a good spirit, I took courage, and you may be certain my first question was what would happen the Dunalbin family.

"'Their race is nearly run,' said she, and drew her hand across her forehead, 'and now 'tis finished!—You shall live and see Macalbin without a foot of land, or a hut in his country to give him shelter.—You shall yet see four different lairds divide Macalbin's lands.—In this glen, you shall see fifty smokes put out in one morning!'—Oh! Mary, conceive my feelings; I forgot the awful being with whom I conversed, and thought only of Macalbin!—

"And his sons?—I cried in agony.

"'They shall live while they live between the turf and the thatch,' said she; 'fifty years hence, and no gentleman will bear the name of Macalbin;——but a day *shall* come.' Oh! Mary, how sadly have I seen all this accomplished!" Moome wept anew the desolation of her clan, and then resumed; "Well, you may be sure I thought, after all I had seen and

heard, I was no longer for this world, had the spirit not told that I should live to see;—would that I had died, and never seen! After a while, I asked what would happen to Norman Ballachadron, the Laird's brother's son, a *cho-alt* of my own he was, and a gay, wild young man; many is the chase he would give myself, when he would come to the hill with his gun, and I a young girl, alone in the shealing, and the herds all out of sight.

"'He will follow evil, and evil will pursue him,' said she; 'he will go to misery, and his lands to the Macphersons.' Mary, I thought it a pity of his father's son!" *

Moome reserved the remaining part of her vision to another opportunity, for the spirit had communicated very copious information, and now went home to refresh her spirits with a short sleep, before the funeral of the stranger required her attendance.

The sun shone brightly on the following

* This is an abridged account of a vision, or rather spirit, seen by a woman in one of the isles a few years ago. Many of her predictions are already fulfilled: she lives to witness the daily fulfilment of others; and the accomplishment of the whole is devoutly expected by her all-believing countrymen. With a licence common to all expounders of visions, some alterations have been made in the above, to suit particular purposes; but they are very few.

morning, when Ronald sent off his horse to fetch the Minister;—it was the fairest of winter days; mild, yet clear; and Ronald, who had the enviable talent of appropriating and finding pleasure in every common blessing, almost flattered himself it had been sent to grace the splendid funeral he meant to give to the wandering stranger.

It was noon when the Minister, Ronald, his wife, and daughter, together with the orphan and his nurse, embarked in the same boat that was to convey the remains of the stranger to her last home. In another boat was the Piper, who professionally attended the burial; and old Moome, and such other inhabitants of the hamlet as age and virtue had rendered most respectable. Several other boats, promiscuously crowded with men and women from the farms round the lake, closed the procession; for at that time the custom of females attending funerals still prevailed, though now almost fallen into disuse.

The little vessels glided slowly over the lake, the dashing of the oars measured by the melancholy notes of the bagpipe, whose long-drawn dolorous tones, imitating the expression of human sorrow, now died away in faint hollow murmurs, and again burst on the

ear with all the broken impetuosity of impassioned grief. It was a scene of powerful interest; and the poor Highlanders, whose passions are all of the liveliest and most ardent kind, and susceptible of any impulse through the medium of their national music, appeared grieved in a manner which to a stranger must have seemed either affected or absurd. But it was not the simple feeling of pity for the untimely fate of the unfortunate wanderer, though they truly mourned her destiny;—it was not merely the helpless state of the infant orphan, though their hearts tenderly allowed his claim;—it was the remembrance of other years that swept over their minds with a power so strong, yet so tender;—it was the view of that sacred isle where reposed the dust of their chiefs, those departed heroes who had advanced the name of Macalbin to so high a pitch of glory among the clans of the country;—it was the venerable figure of the Lady, who stood alone on the beach, like the guardian genius of the place,—the Lady, the last of Macalbin's line, deserted in her old age!—it was the hills of their fathers! those lofty mountains which, for ages immemorial, had been the scene of their departed glory,—that combined to awaken the high and solemn en-

thusiasm of the national character :—but, above all, it was the "Coronach of Macalbin," that touched a chord in every bosom, which vibrated the deepest tones of sorrow; and the last of the clan wept together as they slowly approached the ground which, in their eyes, was hallowed.

Lady Augusta bowed a silent welcome, and the mourning train proceeded to her cottage. There they halted. They would first witness the baptism of the orphan, for the presence of the inanimate mother was dear to superstitious tenderness.

"Let him be named Norman," said the Lady; "it was the name of him who last— it was the name of the youngest son of Macalbin."

Tears were all the reply; and the simple ceremony was performed. The Lady kissed, and blessed the little orphan whom she took to her arms.

"Be thou happier than he whose name thou bearest."—Had the Lady added another word, her feelings might have overpowered that habitual self-control she struggled to maintain; and she gave the infant to the attendants. The sleeping innocent was carried round the kindly circle, receiving mingled embraces and benedic-

tions; and they proceeded to the spot set apart as a last refuge for the misfortunes of his mother.

"She is taken away from the evil to come," said the Lady, as, bending over the grave, she wiped away a sympathising, and not ungrateful tear.—"Blessed are they who die in youth, they are at rest from trouble!"—Her mind reverted to her early sorrows, and another tear trembled on her eye-lash.

The shovelled earth now rattled hollowly on the coffin. That ghastly sound!—for a moment it chilled the current of life in every bosom. Gradually it became more obtuse; some of the attendants wept, and the earth was fast closing over all that had been mortal of the early victim of misfortune. Another minute, and it was all over! and the sweeping blast strewed the lingering yellow leaves of autumn on the turf which wrapped her cold remains.—The Highlanders bowed profoundly, and slowly retired from the grave.

The Lady kept the infant Norman, his nurse, and Mary, for the remainder of the day; and the rest of the party proceeded to Ronald's barn, where the feast was spread. Trout of the lake, grouse from the moors, the fowls, cheese, and other rural dainties, contributed by friend-

ly neighbours on similar occasions, furnished a table in the wilderness; and by the potent aid of Ronald's shell, a scene very different from the preceding was exhibited. It was the second act of a Highland funeral.

CHAP. VI.

" The wild glen hides an orphan boy,
He binds his vale-flowers with the reed ;
He wears love's sunny eye of joy,
And birth he little seems to heed."

LANGHORNE.

——————" The live-long summer day
She at the house end sits ; and oft her wheel
Is stopped, while on the road far-stretched she bends
An eye-o'erflowing melancholy look ;
Or strives to mould the distant traveller
Into the form of him who's far away.
Hopeless and broken-hearted, still she loves
To sing, " *When wild war's deadly blast was blawn.*"

GRAHAME.

THE *news* of a stranger lady, whom Ronald smith had found in Glenlenan, spread like wild-fire over the district, with many wonderful exaggerations. It was said he had found a great sum of money in her possession ; that her friends had committed her to his care ;—a thousand things were said, but conjecture was at last exhausted, for months and years passed away, and no inquiry was ever made after the wandering female.

Meanwhile, the little orphan remained in happy unconsciousness, under the protection of the warm-hearted mountaineers; and gradually the lovely infant ripened into a blooming boy, and in Glenalbin gaily sported away those first blest days when innocence smiles on the joys of infancy.

Norman, now nearly six years old, was universally known by the appellation of "the Lady's child;" and was become so general a favourite in Dunalbin, that in every hovel he might have found a home, and in every individual a friend and protector. And Norman was also Piper Hugh's *pet*, and Moome's *darling*; and never had so much love been lavished on happy childhood. The affections of his faithful Mary were now bound up in him; for peace had for many years been concluded with America; every war-worn soldier had returned to his family;—Allan was not known to have shared a soldier's bed, still Mary heard not of her lover. Mary, besides numberless personal attractions, was an heiress, and many suitors contended for her fair hand; but, faithful to the memory of her unfortunate lover, she steadily rejected every offer, and seemed regardless even of that odious epithet Old Maid, a most ungrateful sound to the ears of a young High-

landwoman. Ronald, who was most desirous to see his daughter married, was certainly surprised, and even provoked by her obstinacy.—"But she is a good girl for all that," thought he; "and certainly has little of her mother's temper;"—for that good woman still used gentle remonstrances, when Ronald's social feelings kept him late at fairs and funerals.

The only servant of Lady Augusta, a stout Highland girl, who rowed a small skiff every morning to Dunalbin, usually took the boy back with her; and the cherub face of little Norman was now the chief attraction of the Lady's breakfast table. The Lady wished that he should converse familiarly in English from his earliest infancy, an accomplishment not to be learned in Dunalbin, where the only language was pure Gaelic. She was not, however, infected with the fashionable fear which now reigns in most Highland families; she was old-fashioned enough to think, that there was nothing very horrible or vulgar in a mountain child lisping the language of the mountains; in a Highlander being perfectly acquainted with the energetic idiom of his native land. She even felt something like contempt for those modern renegadoes who pride themselves in

real, and often in affected ignorance of all that it should be their boast to know.

Little Norman now spoke English and Gaelic with equal fluency, and usually recounted to the Lady, in the former tongue, the fairy tales with which old Moome entertained him in the latter. Often when, in relating his little stories, a flash of intelligence, like a wandering sun-beam, would light up his childish features, and give a transient glimpse of the future man; the Lady would for a moment imagine a wild, visionary, flitting resemblance to all that she had ever loved and lost; and gaze, sigh, and gently dismiss him. Indeed, she was now so much attached to the child, that it was with reluctance she ever saw him depart from Eleenalin; but she could not damp his gay spirits, by making him the melancholy sharer of her solitary evenings: and, from the example of her humble neighbours, she had nothing to fear for her young protegé. They were poor, indeed, according to the generally received notions; and the pedantry of knowledge might have deemed them ignorant:—but they had no taint of vulgarity, no mean servility; their deference to rank was the homage of sentiment;—no surly selfishness;—none of those coarse features of

character which distinguish the peasantry of other countries.

It was a fine evening in the end of March, when Norman, breaking wildly from the servant of the Lady, who had rowed him ashore, tripped away, light as the breeze that flitted over the lake, to the cottage of Moome.

The cottage of Moome was the theatre, the opera-house, and the ball-room of Dunalbin. Every night a rosy smiling group might be seen encircling the fire of turf which blazed cheerily in the middle of her hut;—a group that united social enjoyment with individual usefulness, and gaily blended mirth with industry. Young women were seen busily turning their wool-wheels, girls still younger knitting or carding. Even playful infants, their fairy toils well repaid by Moome's tales, seated in every corner, would tease wool and listen, smiling over their voluntary labour; while the young men, returned from their daily occupations, would employ themselves in making brogues, wooden dishes, rude baskets, twisting coarse bents into ropes, to be applied to various uses, making and repairing such nets as were wanted in the fishery of the lake:—and "each by the lass he loved," swelled the choral song, or listened with deep attention to the chanted legendary

ballad, and the tale of other times;—the traditionary record of ancestral glory, the spirit-stirring, and oft-recounted, exploits of CLAN-ALBIN.

It was a scene of this kind, a scene of simple and natural enjoyment, that the distant halloo of Norman interrupted, as he flew up the green slope from the margin of the lake.

"That is my boy," said Mary, while her eyes shot a gleam of delight. She had but slightly participated in the sociality of the evening, for her heart was heavy. She thought of him who was "far away;" at times she thought of him as still living, and it was a hope which rather distracted than tranquillized her mind: yet Mary, in her turn, sung her ballad, but it was in unison with the feeling of the moment;—a simple Gaelic ditty, composed by a woman, a native of the glen, some years before, on a very melancholy occasion. In the following lines it is rather imitated than translated; for Gaelic "thoughts that breathe," can only be truly conveyed in the glowing pictured words of the mountain tongue.

BALLAD.

O cold, cold, blows the wintry blast,
  The snow falls on my cheek;
All slumber in the arms of love,
  But a grave is all I seek.

For wildly blew the blast of war,
  My true-love cross'd the sea;
And cold he lies in the arms of death,
  Far, far from home and me.

Now Heaven preserve mine orphan boy,
  Sweet pledge of sweeter love;
Dear image of a hapless sire,
  O may'st thou happier prove!

Will Heaven protect mine orphan boy?
  Will angels be his guard?—
Hope brightens in his sunny eye,
  A mother's prayer is heard.

Then fare thee well, mine orphan boy,
  Sweet babe of many tears,
Thy father's love, thy mother's joy:—
  Heaven shield thine infant years;

For I must to my true-love's grave,
  Across the stormy deep;
I'll stretch me on his hallow'd sod,
  And so soundly I shall sleep.

Moome, whom native courtesy taught to divide her attentions among her youthful guests with punctilious nicety, had often addressed

herself to Mary, but her soul was sad; and Moome's next tale was that of "Sir Bertram and Margaret the fair;" for Moome, though no metaphysician, had a clew to all the mysterious workings of the human heart.

It was a Saxon tale;—Sir Bertram, a knight of the cross, had once on a time gone to the Holy Land, leaving his lady, fair Margaret, to pine in solitude. Twenty years had he been absent, and he was universally believed to have fallen into the hands of the *Foul Paynim*; Margaret devoted herself to his memory, shut herself up in her castle, saying prayers for the repose of his soul, and working his exploits on tapestry with her maidens. But Heaven preserved its knight, and he returned to reward, with increased affection, the suffering and constancy of the "Fair Margaret."

Mary wept at the recital, but her heart was soothed; and when she heard the gleesome shout that announced her little Norman, she was almost happy.

"God bless the boy!" cried Moome, as Norman bounded into the middle of the circle, and kissed his "*Mother-beg*," (little mother), for so he named Mary, and pressed his cherub lip to the hairy cheek of his "dear, dear Hugh Piper." He then saluted the whole circle, and

delivered the kind remembrance of his "Lady Mother," and her inquiries about Hugh's rheumatism, and Moome's eyes, and the foot of Catharine, the daughter of Catharine, which had been burnt. He then seated himself with the younger children, and the well-teased wool was soon scattered about, to the great annoyance of Moome, and the inexpressible delight of Hugh Piper. But the restless vivacity of his temperament soon required other amusement; and, creeping slily behind Moome, he snatched the flax from her distaff, and looking archly in her face, playfully held it to the flame, and alternately drew it back.

"Now, Moomie, I shall burn it," said he, "unless you promise to tell me the tale of the 'stranger lady,' who was buried at Kilechan long, long ago, when I was but a little child. I was there to-day alone, and pulled all these primroses on the 'fairy knoll;'" and he took a handful of wild-flowers from his Highland bonnet. "I know every story of every rock in the glen but that. Come now,—that's a dear Moomie.—So you won't! well, here it goes; once, twice,"—and he held the flax to the flame. —"Stay, then, young rogue," said Moome, while her eyes glistened, and every one exchanged such a look! Hugh arose, went out,

and again returned. Norman leaned against Mary, in the attitude of deep attention, while she stopped her wheel, and twisted her fingers into the auburn hair that hung over his green tartan dress. But Moome remained silent;—every one wore an air of restraint, and Norman saw that something was concealed.

"Do, Morag dear, put on the potatoes," said Moome at length; "it must be time, since Norman is come." "That is the story, then?" said he haughtily; "well, my Lady Mother will tell me to-morrow." Norman scorned to intreat a second time; even the flax was safe, for he disdained to burn the flax of an ill-natured old woman, who refused to tell him the story he was so anxious to hear.

Morag, whose turn it had been to be the servant for the night, soon executed her business. The smoking potatoes were emptied into a *claar*, round which every one promiscuously ranged, and partook of a social, if not luxurious meal. It was Saturday, and Moome, whose piety allowed of no dancing, with which the other nights of the week often concluded, followed the young people to the door, with mingled blessings and good-nights. Each was taking off his several way, when Norman suddenly remembered a heap of husks which he carefully

collected during the preceding week, while the young women were skutching their flax. It was no sooner mentioned, than every little urchin, who, overpowered with sleep, had been nestling in the arms of his sister, leaped to the ground. The heap was soon formed; and Norman, rejoicing in the work of destruction, carried the brand, and set fire to the *Bratchel*, which soon flamed to the heavens, many a brilliant sparkle flying off like blue revolving stars, amid the loud shouts and joyful acclamations of the youthful party; who leaped through the flames, dragged and pushed each other in a wanton maze. Even the venerable figure of Moome, as she leaned on her staff, her garments gleaming in the blaze that ruddied her silver locks, was insufficient to protect a favourite cat, which had followed her to the scene of revelry. It was rudely thrown into the flames by a little mischievous boy of the same age as Norman, who, perceiving the danger of the favourite, darted into the flames, and rescued the terrified grimalkin, which he restored to its angry mistress. Norman had now forgot his quarrel with Moome; and, while she patted his head, and sagely predicted, "that he would yet be a gentleman, when the grass waved over her grave that said so," he repeatedly asked if she

thought his "Lady Mother" would see the *Bratchel?*

Hugh's pipe now struck up its gayest lilt, and, by the blaze, every one was jigging; but Norman recollected an omission, and, running to Mary, begged her to hold him high in her arms, till he made a speech. Mary complied, and, smiling upon the crowd below, he desired the girls to meet in Ronald's barn next Monday, to *waulk* blankets for the Lady. "You, Mary-bane, Catharine, Flora, Margaret-roy, Anna-dhu, all of you! come all! all!"—Loudly echoing, all! all! they dispersed; while Norman kissed Moome and the Piper, and, bounding into the arms of Mary, was carried away.

The news of the *waulking* was a happy hearing for Moome. At such meetings, she presided in all her power and glory; and, as the Piper conducted her to her hut, she could not forbear expressing her unfeigned pity for the Lowlanders, whom what are called *flax-mills* and *fulling-mills*, precluded from all social delights of beating and skutching, the blaze of a Bratchel, and, above all, the superlative joys of a *waulking*. Moome had not the remotest idea, but that the modes of life by which she was surrounded were not only the happiest, but the best and most enviable; and never thought

of the Lowlanders but with a mixed feeling of pity and contempt. The Piper was convinced that they were the best, but by no means quite so certain that they were so esteemed; and his feelings for Lowlanders were those of dislike and disdain.

Hugh Piper, the present favourite of Norman, and the faithful follower in after life of all his varied fortunes,—the friend, the counsellor, the fellow sufferer,—was a person of somewhat singular character. Hugh was a bachelor, about forty years of age, and boasted the proud distinction of being the lineal descendant of the high hereditary piper of Clan-albin. And the talent had not degenerated in Hugh, who was esteemed one of the first players of the bagpipe in the Highlands or the Isles. Hugh was, moreover, an exquisite performer on the violin, an eminent hunter, and a skilful fisher. The Lady, with whom he lived in his boyhood, had bestowed some pains on his education, intending him for a schoolmaster to the hamlet; but this was an occupation little suited to his habits, and perhaps beneath the dignity of the high hereditary piper. One seldom makes progress in what is despised; and the Piper had no great opinion of clerkly skill. In short, Hugh had

no capacity for learning; and now, in his fortieth year, he remained as ignorant as infancy of every thing beyond the mountains. Only, he knew that the Saxons were a selfish, effeminate, grovelling race, *mongrels* and *slounges*, creatures of yesterday; whose contempt of his country he repaid with tenfold scorn; whom he hated somewhat less than the clan of ———, (which every Macalbin is born and bound to hate), but despised infinitely more. But, though the most violent of clansmen, Hugh was the most kind-hearted of men; every individual of the abhorred clan, or the despised country, with whom he chanced to meet, proved an exception to the general rule, till, like many other good rules, it was more spoken of than acted upon. On every thing within his limited sphere, his observation was singularly acute. His mind grasped firmly at every object with which it came into contact; and although his views were seldom comprehensive, they were often true, and always original. And on these Hugh would reason with all the inaccuracy of enthusiasm, and speak with all the natural eloquence of strong feeling. Hugh possessed, in a high degree, that whimsical combination of shrewdness, simplicity, and humour, which characterizes

many of his countrymen; and, like them, his first passion was clanship. But to these national features of mind, he added some that were peculiarly his own. Among these was an unbounded fondness for children. Hugh was admirably skilled in all their little sports; a most ingenious fabricator, and a very generous distributor of toy-boats, bows and arrows, *shinnys*, and elder-tree guns; and he was as zealous in sharing, as in promoting their games; for he still possessed the wild spirits, open affections, and artless manners of childhood. Hugh never passed a hazel thicket, without thinking how well they liked filberts; nor climbed a hill, without thinking how droll they looked when they stained their cheeks with bilberries. No wonder, then, that the Piper was caressed, and loved, and called "Uncle Hugh," by all the children of the glen. But Hugh was endeared to every age; for his was the most social, friendly, careless, and disinterested of all created natures.

Yet Hugh was a man of many failings. If to spend whole days, and almost every day, in sporting with children, ranging the hills for game, not worth (in that country) the price of the powder, *putting* the stone, throwing the hammer, playing the shinny, piping at this

wedding, and the other interment; or even in lounging in the sun, pursuing the vagaries of wanton fancy, to the utter neglect of every important concern;—if all this was idleness and folly, Hugh was indeed very idle, and very foolish.

CHAP. VII.

> Sweet is the falling of the single voice,
> And sweet the joining of the choral swell
> Without a pause, ta'en up by old and young
> Alternately, in wildly-measured strain.
>
> GRAHAME.

MONDAY came, and brought the *waulking*, an occasion of joy and song. Moome's very best songs were reserved for *waulkings*; and at these social meetings, the spirit of gladness was often poured forth in extemporary verse.

A Highland waulking is a very primitive, and, to some, a highly interesting spectacle. On such occasions, the young women for many miles around the theatre of action, (generally a barn), assemble, and contrive to enjoy a holiday, while they discharge the duties of good neighbourhood. These meetings consist exclusively of females; and some experienced matron presides, not more to direct than to

animate their labours; for she is often herself a poet, and a composer of rude melodies, and is always eminently skilled in music and song,—the soul and charm of a waulking. Animated by exercise, brilliant spirits, and many inspiring associations, the hoary dame and her attendant maidens, while breathing forth the lively effusions of native feeling, through the enchanting medium of their wild national melodies, form a very striking group. From this primitive custom is derived the practice,—common even in the highest circles where Gaelic song is introduced,—of singing round united handkerchiefs. *

It may easily be believed that Moome, who was prime mover in every important operation, shone forth at such seasons with resplendent glory. Alike respectable for age, experience, and sagacity, every thing was guided by her advice, and submitted to her direction. The dying of cloth, or of the yarn for the *tartan*, was performed under her immediate inspection; in making new *sets*, her fancy was al-

* In waulking, the women sit on the ground round a board, or a frame of wicker-work, on which they dash the cloth in measured time to the animating *jorram* or *luinneg*. The leader of the band sings the stanza, the whole band unite in the chorus, which is loudly repeated three times.

lowed to be inimitable; though some of the girls began to think she was rather partial to the brilliant yellow, and the resplendent scarlet. At the making of the great *Lamnas* cheese, and at the salting of the winter *Mart*, while a *Mart* had been annually slaughtered in the *bhalie*, Moome always presided. Then, in nursing the sick, or curing the maimed, she was equally skilful,—had a thousand *charms* against every disease to which man or beast is liable, possessed the power of averting, or rather of counteracting the baneful effects of the *evil eye*, and could make a cow yield her milk to a strange calf. Moome could, besides, expound dreams on the most scientific principles, and tell fortunes either from the grounds of a tea-cup, or, in the more ancient manner, from the shoulder-bone of a sheep. At making Gaelic ryhmes, none in the glen,—in a glen where all were poets,—excelled Moome; and a more extensive collection of the tales of *Ossian-Mach-Fingal*, and of every ancient bard, was in the possession of no person in the Highlands. With the genealogy of all the neighbouring clans she was intimately acquainted; but for the Clan!—the Clan-albin!—Moome could have run up from Sir Norman to Albin Vhor, the first of the line, with more ease and quick-

ness than a Catholic priest repeats his Pater-noster. These talents, and powers, and the virtues they adorned, could not fail to recommend Moome to her clan and kindred;—she was universally loved, and revered as an oracle from whom there was no appeal.—Nor was any wished.

The girls were gathered to the *waulking*, and Norman, with a group of rosy, though ragged children, was seated in a corner of the barn, waulking an old handkerchief, and joining his infant voice in the choral swell, when the barking of dogs was heard. As the barking of dogs always announced a stranger, a rare and interesting object in a secluded glen, Norman sprung up, and hastened along the path. At a considerable distance, he perceived the stranger. Driving forward the pebbles strewed in the path, Norman ran to meet him. It was a soldier: his regimental rags fluttered in the wind, and his shoulders were loaded with a knapsack.

"Welcome! a thousand times!"—cried Norman in Gaelic. "Thank you my dear," replied the soldier; "your appearance is, I hope, ominous of good; you are the first soul I have met in Glenalbin;"—and they walked on together, Norman now hopping on

one foot, now on the other, or wieding his shinny.

"And tell me whose dear little boy *you* are?" said the soldier, for the appearance of Norman was much superior to the children of a Highland hamlet.—"I am the Lady's child, and mother Mary's boy," replied Norman.

"And who is Mary?" cried the soldier.—"The Mary who is my mother, is Mary, the daughter of Ronald, and Duncan," said the boy, still speaking in Gaelic.

"Son of God!—Mary!" cried the soldier; and, fiercely grasping the boy by the shoulder, he again questioned him.—"Mary and the Lady are my mothers," replied he, gazing with wonder on the perturbed countenance of the soldier, which, lately pale and sickly, was now suffused with crimson.

"And your father?"——"I don't know himself, unless it be Ronald smith, or Hugh piper.—Hugh gave me this shinny, and the boat which I swim at Eleenalin, and told me to hold up my head, and look like a chieftain and a warrior."—Norman's information was unheeded; the man leaned against a rock in deep musing.

"If you would give it to myself," said Norman, touching the knapsack, and, with a look

of infantine compassion, regarding the soldier. —"You won't believe how strong I am, and how I threw little Roban, when Uncle Hugh made us wrestle. I could carry it for you, and take you to Mother Mary, who loves the soldiers in her heart; she would give you milk and cheese, like the old one who came to the shealing."

"Then let us go, since Mary loves a soldier," said the man, and he extended his hand. But Norman flew on before.

"Mary, here is a soldier without;—I told him you loved a soldier."—Mary, blushing deeply, rose to give the soldier welcome.

"My child told you we love a soldier," said she, smiling. Allan knew the voice of his beloved;—he was already in the middle of the barn.

"Mary!—your child?" cried the soldier. —Mary gazed, reddened, the blood rushed back to her heart, and she fell into the arms of the soldier, exclaiming, "Allan!—my own Allan!"—The silence which followed was sacred to the best feelings of the human heart.

Quickly the news of Allan's arrival circulated through the hamlet, the glen, the hills,

and the *country*,—" Ronald's Mary's Allan!" The young pair were soon surrounded by their affectionate kindred, and congratulated with all the warmth of the national character: and Moome blessed the LORD that she had lived to see so happy a day, for the sake of her "gentle Mary;" and even hinted that her own prayers had had no inconsiderable effect in bringing about an event at which every one rejoiced.

"I always said he would return," said Moome, addressing herself to Mary.—" Don't you remember now the dream I had of him just Christmas last was three years?"—Mary remembered it well,—her eyes spoke her gratitude, while those of Unah beamed with chastened exultation: she loved to foretell happiness, and it was but right that she should enjoy the success of her predictions. The remainder of the day was dedicated to social joy, —a little jubilee to the young people of Dunalbin, a feast of the kinder feelings to their elders, who gathered around the war-worn soldier, eagerly listening to his tales of woe and wonder.

Ronald's best whisky, and his wife's *bluest* cheese, were distributed with hospitable pro-

fusion; the relations of Allan soon joined the social party; the pipe of Hugh sounded its merriest note, and Mary, seated by her lover, forgot even Norman, who was gone to Eleenalin.

CHAP. VIII.

" The appointed day arrives, a blithsome day
Of festive jollity. * * * *
Soon as the bands are knit, a jocund sound
Strikes briskly up, and nimble feet beat fast
Upon the earthen floor. Through many a reel,
With various steps uncouth, some new, some old,
Some all the dancer's own, with Highland flings
Not void of grace, the lads and lasses strive
To dance each other down."

GRAHAME.

THE Lady was, in the eyes of Norman, the first of human beings, or rather something beyond mortality. His love for Mary was perhaps as tender, but it was a different feeling; what he felt for the Lady was a species of adoration; her image embodied to his fancy the abstract idea the pious Moome had already given him of the Deity. While she directed his infant thoughts to heaven, and laboured to impress his understanding with the incompre-

hensible attributes of the Supreme Being, Lady Augusta was the object of his awe, of his worship, and of the mysterious sentiment of terror and doubt which absorbed his childish imagination. There appeared a gradation so infinite from the Lady to the inhabitants of Dunalbin, that the scale was too boundless for his limited vision; and he assigned to each a different nature, and a different sphere of existence. The extreme solitude in which she lived; the superiority of her manners, obvious even to the infantine discernment of Norman; the dignity of her deportment, her dress, her language, her occupations, and, above all, the profound respect with which every one approached her,—all contributed to foster his enthusiasm, till his imagination, separating her from every other class of beings, formed an ideal world filled by her image. It is not therefore surprising, that Norman, though tormented by the first importunate cravings of curiosity, feared to trouble her about the "lady buried at Kilechan." His heart hovered round the theme, as, standing by her side, he tried with a piece of chalk to delineate her little cottage, its mossy roof, and woodbine porch. The Lady was always kind and indulgent; but on this day she was so peculiarly soft, at-

tentive, and solicitous to dissipate the slight cloud of uneasiness which obscured his sunny features, that Norman began to forget the exalted being in the endearing mother. He had ever been such an exclusive object of attention, so inexpressibly dear, that, though he complained not, he keenly felt the coolness with which Mary had seen him depart for Eleenalin, and the Lady understood these feelings.

"Poor thing!" thought she, gazing sorrowfully on the child; "Mary has found another object to occupy her kind heart;—but what excludes you from all others, brings you nearer to me." The Lady was so condescending, so full of little gratifying marks of attention, so warm in praise of the drawing, that Norman at last gained courage to make his inquiry. The Lady gazed on him with melancholy tenderness; but, desirous to avoid every appearance of mystery, replied, "The lady you inquire about came from a distant country, and died at Dunalbin; and we laid her here. She left a little boy; but the God who took her to himself, will be a father to her little boy, and all men will be his friends."

Norman wept.—"And where is the little boy that has no mother?—Ah! Lady, I have two mothers;—poor little boy!" Lady Augusta

felt the necessity of anticipating the inquiries his dawning reason would suggest, and yet she was unable to shock his infantine sensibility. Norman had wept the death of a favourite robin, and shed, on its span-breadth grave, the tribute of pure and artless affection; he had mourned the fading flowers; he had even been strangely affected by Moome's tales, though hardly conscious of their import;—but a little boy, who had no mother! The sphere of his sympathies was as contracted as that of his wants. Norman soon forgot the lady; but he mused long and sadly on the fate of the little boy.

"Ah! Lady," said he, after a long pause, "who will love him, and kiss him, and say, My child, God bless you?"—Norman fixed his desponding eyes on the face of Lady Augusta.

"That good God who is the orphan's father!" replied the Lady. The idea was too abstract to console the grief of Norman.—"God is not a mother!" cried he, with sorrow so emphatic, that Lady Augusta, much struck with the boldness of the expression he had used, hastily added, "He has given him a mother! and the father of the fatherless is his

father." Norman soon looked the image of childish joy.

The "gentle Mary," in common with all the inhabitants of the glen, felt her happiness incomplete, till it had received the sanction of the Lady. *Gentle* is an epithet sometimes applied to individuals among the Highland peasantry, by their superiors, as denoting peculiar mildness of manners and disposition; for even in the lowliest rank among this primitive people, many a "gentle lad," and "gentle girl," are found worthy of it. Mary, attended by her mother and her lover, had stolen from the scene of festivity, and in the evening visited Eleenalin. The Lady shook the hand of the soldier, and affectionately embraced Mary, around whom Norman clung, while he led her to see, "what he had done!" and Mary examined the drawing with pleasure more exquisite than she could have derived from all that art ever accomplished.

Every care was now lost in the bustle of preparation for the wedding of Mary; and, as she was an only child, and daughter to the richest man in Dunalbin, very magnificent expectations were entertained. Nor were they disappointed. The friends and relatives of Allan and Mary vied in splendour on this important occasion;

not only all the people of the glen, but all the people of the *country*, were invited to Mary's wedding, which was kept up for eight days with true Highland spirit. And from every quarter were nuptial presents sent in, to add to the plenty or luxury of the continued feast. Hugh Piper gave venison, and moor-game, and fish, all of his own killing, and pipe-music in abundance;—the Lady presented a sheep, and tea, and sugar, and biscuits, and ornaments for the bride, and the first tea equipage that had ever been seen in Dunalbin!—Even Moome insisted on killing one of her three white hens, and on presenting the bridegroom with mittens of her own knitting. Not that Ronald needed these liberal contributions,—they were given to his worth, and to the worth of his daughter,—to his pride, rather than to his necessity; in the spirit of Highland courtesy and sociality, of clannish custom and kindness, were they given, and in the same spirit were they received.

But Mary's wedding was more peculiarly honoured; for the Lady, on the second day of the feast, visited Dunalbin! An infant swarm, at the head of which was Norman, flew to the landing-place, followed by all that numerous wedding-party, to hail the approach of the Lady. So seldom did she visit the hamlet,

unless in cases of sickness or death, that her presence excited a general and tumultuous joy. Those whom age or infirmity prevented from visiting the island, crawled to the door of their huts, once more to see, and to bless, as she passed, the last of MACALBIN's line. For every one she had a soothing word, a cheering smile, a gratifying notice, or a considerate inquiry; a trifling something, which, flowing from her own heart, never failed to reach the heart to which it was addressed, dilating it with the pride of clanship, and the glow of grateful affection. With Norman clinging to her robe, the Lady entered the dwelling of Ronald. As she bent her stately form beneath the humble door, pronouncing her emphatic "Peace be to this house!" the spirit of peace seemed to descend, and hover around the little mansion!—And how lovely did Mary's April countenance seem, when the Lady kissed her, and gave her joy; and, in compliance with national custom, drank the health of "*the young wife.*"

This was the second, and most splendid day of this standing festival; and the Lady headed the board spread in Ronald's barn. At her left hand sat the bride, at her right Moome, and next to Moome, Allan's mother; and to Mary a very important personage, who shall in

due time be taken notice of:—and, with the exception of this personage, there was no soul assembled round that board, but boasted the blood of Clanalbin:—heroes for his ancestors, and glory as his inheritance!—How powerful, beyond all other conceptions of earthly power, must that man have been, who, when thus surrounded, might have been addressed,—

> "And not a clansman of thy line,
> But would have given his life for thine!"

Hugh acted both as butler and piper during dinner; and Moome related all the circumstances of her own wedding. But, when Ronald had "*returned thanks*," never did a piece of finer pipe music burst on Highland ears, than that which Hugh had composed for this occasion;—and never had arms been crossed and entwined with greater cordiality, or swung with greater animation, than those around Ronald's board; and, in the pause of the pipe, never had clapping of hands and acclamations been louder or more joyous at any wedding in the glen. *

* At a Highland wedding-feast of the *real* kind, the piper, with his instrument ready inflated, catches the Amen at the end of the grace. Every one crosses his arms on his breast, and gives a hand to his right and his left hand neighbour. The

The Lady staid to witness the commencement of the ball, and saw Hugh dance with the bride, and Ronald with Allan's mother;—for, in that country, when this cherished amusement is going forward, it is "alike all ages." Attended by Ronald, she then withdrew to his cottage.

entwined arms are swung with abundant violence till certain pauses in the music, when they are disengaged, and the pause filled with clapping of hands and joyous acclamations. The party are again and again alternately entwined by the arms, and engaged in clapping and acclamations, till the music ceases, and the performance terminates.

CHAP. IX.

"The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."

GOLDSMITH.

NORMAN had hitherto conned his fairy lore to the Lady, and had made so good progress, that he could already make out a chapter in the Gaelic Bible, to the great edification of Moome, who had predicted much future good of his soul from the time that, in reading a very pathetic story, at the words—" and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack!"—he had burst into tears. Few young hearts can stand that terrible enunciation, and Norman wept and sobbed as if his heart would have broken. But even Moome, partial as she was, could

not say that the education of Norman was completed; for she was a great admirer of the clearness of the *Jewish genealogies* ;—those chapters going on—"which was the son of Solomon, which was the son of David, which was the son of Jesse,"—were particularly favoured, from their striking resemblance to the rhyming genealogies of her country. Now, Norman could not make out these; though, with a volubility which might have confounded and provoked an unbeliever in Ossian, he could run over the genealogy of the bard; as "Oscar the son of Ossian, the son of Fingal, the son of Comnal," &c. &c.—and of many of the clans. But every child in the hamlet, in the glen, and indeed in the Highlands, could do the same; and Moome confessed, that a little more learning would do the boy no great harm.

The Lady wished to consult Ronald in the future arrangements her generous concern for the orphan boy suggested; and the affectionate regard Ronald had ever evinced for the child, well entitled him to such a mark of attention. Ronald, Moome, and the Piper, were therefore summoned to a conference on the merits of the important personage who had sat next to the bride at the wedding-feast.—In diffe-

rent hamlets throughout that widely extended, and then populous parish, there were little schools where the reading of Gaelic was taught, and something like English attempted; but George Buchanan, the parish schoolmaster, was reputed a person of very great learning. He was not a native of that part of the country, and the Lady had seldom seen him; but she had often heard him mentioned with great approbation by the inhabitants of the hamlet. The *country* rung with the fame of his learning; but in the country, learning was not much understood, and still less valued. The Lady, unable to judge of any thing else, could only give him full credit for the virtues attributed to him;—every heart could estimate their value, and his temperance, piety, and primitive simplicity of manners, were universally acknowledged. Yet these were not precisely Highland virtues; and Buchanan had obtained the respect of his neighbours, long before he had interested their affections. But now he was loved as much as any man, "who was not a drop of blood to them," could possibly be; and the Piper, who delighted to praise, though he disdained to flatter, was eloquent in his eulogy.

"At the argument, as I am told, the parson

is a mere joke to him," said Hugh.—"He will make you believe this world is all a notion, and that we just fancy that we hear, and see, and smell;—then he holds forth on essences and spirits, (which shows there are spirits in the low country as well as in our own), and the *genealogy* of vibrations, and the propagation of vibrations, and vibratiuncles,—which, no doubt, among the Saxons, is a namely clan. Then (by your leave) he will use such strange words, that it would make a Christian wonder to hear him; for the Gaelic, nor the Saxon neither, won't hold him again; he's off to the Hebrew and the Welsh in a minute, and tells you the name of every star that shines; and what the merry dancers are made of; and how many miles it is to the moon, and how many barley-grains would go round her; and how the big Bens were once all on fire. Now, I said nothing to him, so, Lady, you may believe that or not as you please; and likewise as to things being fifty times less than nothing, and sixty times less than nothing, which may be great learning for aught I know; though sure enough——Well, it does not become me to doubt the word of a gentleman and a Christian, whom—(though neither kith nor kin of mine, I won't belie him)—I never heard find

fault with son of woman, save the Pope, and the *natural wife* of one BABYLON. Now, I think he might as well let the poor girl alone, and not be exposing his own countrywoman among strangers; for, God help her, though I never saw her between the eyes, she is perhaps called as bad as she is: we all know the power a great gentleman has over a poor creature."——The Lady faintly smiled at the mistake of the Piper, who, intimately informed of every thing connected with his own country, its poetry, traditionary history, superstitions, usages, and even interests, knew nothing beyond the mountains.

Lady Augusta would certainly have been as well pleased that the tutor she designed for Norman had let the poor Pope and Lady Babylon remain at peace; but she did not perceive that his hostility augured any of that want of candour which Hugh insinuated. Mr Buchanan was called in, and it was finally settled, that, on the following Monday, Norman should be sent to Ballyruag for education.

This place was four Highland miles distant from Glenalbin; and many tears were shed on all sides at the idea of separation. The Piper busied himself in working parting presents for his favourite; Moome loaded him

with pious counsel, and when the terrible day came, wept over him; and Mary fondly kissed her darling; while the Lady, scarcely less affected, bestowed her heartfelt benediction; and all the women and children of Dunalbin accompanied him a great way. Even Moome went farther than she had been for many years before,—the length of the lovely fountain near which she had seen the spirit. This spot, where a limpid stream gushed from a mossy rock, might, to Grecian imagination, have suggested a presiding Naiad. It was one of those sacred springs so common in the Highlands, to which many virtues are ascribed, and which bear the name of some patron saint. Moome washed the face of Norman in its waters, and bathed her own eyes for a dimness of sight; and Ronald laved his arms for the rheumatism; another took a mouthful to cure the toothach; and several poor women, with whom potatoes were become scarce, took large draughts from "*Mary's well*," to cure the "*craving at the heart*," a disease painfully common in the Highlands, in the springs and summers that succeed scanty harvests. And now Moome implored the protection of every good being for her "darling," and to make assurance doubly sure, tied round his neck a

green *charmed* thread as a defence from bad ones; for a boy so lovely was peculiarly liable to *evil-eye;* the fairies would be delighted with such a subject; and Norman was going where he would frequently be seen by persons of the abhorred clan; in whom Moome, to say the least, had no confidence. But he solemnly promised that, night nor day, the green thread should never for a moment leave his neck, and Moome was somewhat consoled. When the last moment arrived, Norman manfully struggled with his feelings, and tearing himself away, gave his hand to the Piper, who acted as *sumpter-mule.* And many a blessing and expression of endearment followed him, who durst not trust himself to look back till he had attained the head of the mountains. And then one last look of the glen, the hamlet, and the island!—Norman's sorrow was now at the height; he sobbed so bitterly, that the Piper could no longer stand it, and he proposed to go back.—"For what, after all, is the worth of any thing you will get from him? I don't see but that Moome and myself might teach you as well every thing a gentleman need to know."

But Norman, with more judgment than his conductor, recalled the precepts of the Lady, and heroically withstood the powerful tempta-

tion. The glen which spread at his feet was to him a new object: he saw the school-house, the church, and twenty different things to engage attention. Now, in a Highland glen, every rock, every bush is storied; and Hugh could tell all the local wonders that depended on the scenes around. So the spirit of Norman rose, till compelled to part with this last cherished friend.

Hugh, too, was gone!—and when Norman had dried his eyes, he began to survey his future abode, and the man whose wonderful wisdom was the cause of tearing him from all he loved. Norman's observations were by no means favourable. Mr Buchanan might have much latent kindness of heart, but there was in his manners nothing of Highland warmth, courtesy, and softness. Norman thought him a very ungainly, ungracious, and ungraceful personage; very learned, indeed, for the Lady said so, but very tiresome, and he yawned the rest; for after the first five minutes, Buchanan had resumed his studies, and was busied with a large book,—far larger than Moome's bible.

George Buchanan was the son of a small farmer in the western parts of Stirlingshire. An early display of quick parts had procured him the name of a *genius*, and he was devoted to the

ministry from his tenderest years. There is one species of ancestral pride entertained by some of the Lowland peasantry, and it was the boast of Buchanan's family. Above the fire-place hung a "rusty rapier," which a hero had wielded at the "BRIG OF BOTHWELL." It was not without reason that Buchanan boasted of his humble ancestor, illustrated only by undisguised hatred, and fearless opposition, to the tyranny of a worthless prince. From the era of the Scotish persecution, the first-born of this family had always been named GEORGE, in honour of the martyred ancestor, and solemnly dedicated to the promulgation of those principles, in support of which he had shed his blood. Such had been the high destiny of Norman's tutor. His father, a sturdy champion of the *covenants*,—a dogmatical, intolerant, and fiery zealot,—had trained his infancy in all the rigour of ancient Presbyterianism. His mother was likewise of the "seed of the martyrs;" and with his milk he had sucked in the troublesome controversial spirit, which, with a smattering of *divinity*, is very often the distinction of a Lowland peasant. Buchanan had fed on the "*Marrow*" from his infancy; the "*Cloud of Witnesses*" had been to him what fairy tales are to other children; from his ten-

derest years he had gone ten miles every Sunday to hear a Cameronian preacher; and had visited, with the same feelings excited in the bosom of a patriot on viewing Marathon or Bannockburn, those memorable spots where his forefathers, skulking from the ferocity of the moss-troopers,

"Had erst hymned praise, their right hands on their hilts."

High were the hopes entertained of the young saint, who promised to turn out a Cargill, a Peden, or a Cameron; and great was the disappointment he inflicted on his family. His clerical education was not completed, when, happening to be engaged as a tutor in the family of a Highland gentleman, he fell in love with a dependent female, who, related to the lady of the mansion, acted as a sort of housekeeper. Buchanan had struggled through many difficulties in the course of his attendance at the university of Glasgow; he had now surmounted them all, and almost grasped those clerical honours, the inspiring object of so much toil and ambition. But the eyes of Flora were indeed irresistible, for they subdued even ecclesiastical pride. Love and matrimony had the same meaning in the vocabulary of Buchanan; and hopes of church preferment could not

maintain a wife and family. For these, some permanent provision was necessary, however humble; and the high-destined Buchanan sunk into the condition of a schoolmaster, among a race who neither knew nor cared about the martyrs, the covenants, nor the nursing-fathers, nor nursing-mothers of the church;—a race whose religion consisted more in deeds of mercy, than in dogmas of belief.

Immured for twenty years in the very centre of the Highlands, Buchanan was in every sense an isolated being, shut out from every hope of intellectual intercourse. Of what avail was his subtlety in argument, and skill in controversy, among a people "that could render no other reason of the hope that was in them," save that they feared God, and loved his creatures, and humbly trusted in his mercy.

Buchanan had long despaired of extending the empire of the faith he professed in the Highlands, or even of being at all understood by his neighbours; and, as few care about what they do not comprehend, his peculiar talents were held in little estimation. In a situation so barren of resources, it may naturally be presumed that Buchanan still retained a love of study; and the strong bias of early education, when no longer counteracted by the influence

of society, predominated over every other:—Buchanan was poring, disputatious, visionary, and devoted to the Fathers. But every man is said to have a favourite hobby, and Buchanan had his;—for some years he had bestrode, with much zeal and triumph, "the Beast with the seven heads and ten horns, and upon the horns ten crowns;"—a somewhat formidable Rozinante.

Mystery Babylon, Antichrist, Gog and Magog, the *vials*, and *seals*, and *trumpets*, the great battle of Armageddon, and, finally, the earthly Millennium, formed the magic circle round which the mind of Buchanan revolved with ever new delight. The whole force of his naturally strong mind was directed to explain the prophecies of Daniel, and to elucidate the mysteries of St. John's Revelation. Never had the prophets a more zealous expositor, for Buchanan now abandoned every favourite and liberal science, unless it tended to develope his darling mysteries; and might even have neglected his cherished algebra, had he not contrived to employ it in the calculation of "a time, times, and a half time;" and "the thousand, and two hundred, and five and thirty days." Many other very learned and ingenious men had devoted themselves to the prophets;

but, allowing them all the praise they merited, Buchanan could not help thinking that he had got the start of them; for he could now demonstrate to every one who chose to attend and believe, the exact place where Gog and Magog should gather the nations together to the great battle of Armageddon. Yet, a character of benevolence pervaded all Buchanan's systems; his wars and rumours of wars, and vials of wrath, were but prelusive of times of unalloyed happiness;—to those days when the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, when Justice and Truth shall meet together, and Mercy and Peace embrace each other.

Such was the person to whom the education of Norman was committed; a man to whom the words of the poet might be truly applied,—

"His conduct still right, with his argument wrong."

In spite of the smiles and caresses of a sportive and lovely little girl,—all that now remained to Buchanan of that beloved Flora, for whom he sacrificed the "Testimony," and the "Covenants," and his birthright,—Norman longed sadly for Saturday;—for Saturday was to bring the Piper to take him home.

No one could accuse the Piper of laziness on that morning, for he was at Ballyruag by the "*screech;*" and every Saturday, for eight succeeding years, found him equally punctual, unless the deep defile which was the communication between the glens was blocked up with snow. Every Saturday and Sunday was spent at Dunalbin and Eleenalin, or at the summer shealings of the inhabitants of the hamlet. Thus the classical and the *Highland* education of Norman went on together: Hugh was his master in every Highland exercise, his companion on the "hill of deer." In common with all the young people of the hamlet, he shared the lessons of an itinerant dancing-master; one of those humble teachers who still go from farm to farm in the Highlands, giving instruction in a favourite, and indeed indispensible accomplishment. And Moome was still the historian and the bard, whose spells of potent witchery overcame his young fancy, and cherished the enthusiasm they had first awakened.

Norman was for some years the favourite pupil of Buchanan. His close attention to the improvement of the young scholar, almost diverted him from the investigation of the mys-

teries;—and their union, cemented by protection and indulgence on the one side, and by grateful respect on the other, had never been for a moment disturbed, since the first year of Norman's residence at Ballyruag. During that period, indeed, an accident happened, which had almost cut off Norman from all hopes of acquaintance with Virgil and Homer. Buchanan, in the course of his studies, had imagined a very happy manner of illustrating his theories by a sort of drawing. The idea was perhaps borrowed from Priestley's chart. However that may be, the drawing in question was a master-piece, which had occupied many a winter's evening, and many a rainy Saturday. It might more properly be termed a Chart of the Revelations, as it was intended to illustrate the whole series of the prophecies, and give a comprehensive view of the fulfilling of the types in regular succession. The principal figure was the Beast with seven heads and ten horns, designed from a description given of a water-spirit by the neighbouring Highlanders, which was said to reside in a loch not very distant. Mrs Buchanan in person, dressed in her red temming gown, had sat for the woman clothed in scarlet; and was seen seated on the beast, holding in her hand the *quaich* of sorceries.

To the right hand lusty angels, in well preserved perspective, were seen blowing the trumpets; the seals were opening; and the vials, ranged head downmost, were pouring out their contents.

Such was the splendid composition which had often excited the wonder and desire of the little blue-eyed pupil of Norman. Flora had used every art of babyhood to obtain possession of the prize, but hitherto unsuccessfully. One unlucky day, Buchanan, having a little leisure, took his favourite production from its place of security, to affix some notes of reference. The children looked on with wonder and admiration, and Norman told his little companion the tale of the water-spirit. It had made a deep impression on his young fancy, for it related to boys of his own age and condition.

"A number of little boys had gone to bathe and sport about a dark loch, in a wild rugged glen. A beautiful milk-white horse came from the loch, so gentle, that it stretched itself out, and pawed, and allured some of the more adventurous to mount its back. Another and another mounted, and the animal still stretched itself out to receive its victims, till they were all in its power, when it suddenly plunged into

the lŏch, which swallowed up the water-spirit and its riders." *

Flora was listening to this narrative, when her father for a moment left the room, and she clutched at the drawing. Flora was standing by a blazing turf-fire, her size was small, and the drawing unwieldly; in a moment it catched the flame, she flung it away, and, as Norman sprung forward to save if possible a single horn of the beast, Buchanan re-entered! For a moment he stood as if panic-struck by the magnitude of his misfortune; the child ran to hide herself in the garden, and Norman was left to suffer the full vengeance of the indignant author. Buchanan, naturally calm and serious, knew little of angry passions; but, on this momentous occasion, his rage was like a whirlwind, and the undeserved punishment of Norman was rather proportioned to his own angry emotions, than the enormity of the offence.

Norman bore his punishment with the forti-

* This little tale of the water-horse was current, not long since, among the people of Balquhidder. A dark loch, on the top of a mountain adjoining Glen-Ogle, that savage and gloomy valley, through which the high road between Loch-Earn-head and Glen-Dochart is carried, was the abode of the kelpie. Some children were certainly drowned there; and Highland superstition allows none of its votaries to perish ingloriously.

tude of a hero, till the little girl, loudly proclaiming herself the offender, rushed into the room, followed by the Piper. Buchanan, shocked at his own injustice, and affected by the generosity of the boy, and the tenderness of Flora, could not articulate a word, while Norman flung himself into the arms of Hugh, and first gave way to his feelings of insult. The little girl also clung to him weeping, as if for protection; and the Piper, his eyes sparkling with rage, regarded her father with those keen looks which, in the days of clanship, may have preceded the stroke of the dirk. All his delicacy, self-command, and habitual respect for "a gentleman and a Christian," could not restrain the expression of his feelings. Buchanan then explained; Flora was forgiven at the intreaty of Norman, and a peace was restored, which was never again interrupted. The Piper alone was dissatisfied; and, though he said no more, he thought he had never seen any one look so like a Saxon *slounge*, a mean-souled mongrel Lowlander, as Buchanan, when making his young friend suffer for a nonsensical picture. "I wish he were on the back of it himself in Lochdow,"—thought Hugh.

CHAP. X.

"Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain
The simple pleasures of the lowly train,
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
* * * *
These were thy charms, sweet village, sports like these
In sweet succession taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms,—but all these charms are fled."

GOLDSMITH.

NORMAN, now entered on his fifteenth year, was gone to spend the Christmas holidays at Dunalbin and Eleenalin, accompanied by Flora Buchanan. Norman had long regarded his fair companion with all a brother's protecting fondness, and never did sister return a brother's affection with greater tenderness. One roof sheltered their childhood; they had pursued the same studies, and shared the same sports; and even at holiday times, they lived together at Mary's shealing, or the Lady's cottage.

"The Christmas" is now the only stated holiday enjoyed by the Highland peasant. It is still spent in the manner most congenial to his ancient habits. Darkness alone terminates the animating sports of the field; and to these succeed the pleasures of the festive board, the delight of traditionary converse, the inspiring song, and the merry dance. This holiday is accordingly eagerly anticipated, and ardently enjoyed, by this warm-hearted race.

An absurd prejudice prevails among the people of the low-country, who cannot imagine a Highlander without the accompaniments of a *whisky-bottle* and a *snuff-mull.* Highlanders, on the contrary, are, in the ordinary routine of life, the most abstemious of all people. The occasional excesses witnessed at funerals are chiefly for the honour of the dead, that succeeding generations may triumphantly tell how much wine, and how many *casks*, were drank at the burial of an ancestor; —how many *riders* attended, and how many miles they came to honour the obsequies of a namesake or kinsman. With supreme contempt for unmanly epicurism, and inordinate fondness of *comforts*, the Highlander has his own cherished pleasures,—neither degrading, nor selfish, nor brutal,—but social and joyous;

valued only as they enliven society,—pursued to brighten and exhilarate the man,—not to gratify the brute. He has small delight in sharing the cup of him with whom his soul refuses to mingle; and shrinks from intercourse with those who cannot understand and participate in all his peculiar feelings. Even in the very focus of contagious brutality, in the ranks of an English regiment, shielded by his national habits, wrapped up in himself, grave, austere, and unsocial, he preserves his integrity; and returns to the land of his nativity,—to the glen of his fathers,—to the betrothed of his youth,—high in fame, pure in honour, and enriched by generous self-denial,—to lavish his fortune on those who possess his tenderness. Now within the magic circle of kindred and affection, he surrenders himself to their influence, and is again frank, social, and humorous; and gaily pledges the cup with those who share his soul.

"The Christmas" at length arrived, and by the grey dawn, the maidens, the young men, and all who thought themselves young enough to share or enliven the sport of the day, were met on a flat of considerable extent at the head of the glen. It was the first of Norman's fields; and the triumph of the youthful cham-

pion of Dunalbin might have been read in the looks of Mary and Flora Buchanan, or heard in the cheering shouts of Ronald. And as Norman bounded after the ball with the fleetness of a roe, the Piper, who had entered into the national sport with all the fire and alacrity of youth, confessed that he was surpassed;—"though in running, he had never before yielded to any man who spelled his name Macalbin, far less any thing else." However, Hugh shared by reflection the triumph of Norman: —"for it was himself first put a *shinny* into the boy's hand."

When the sun had gone down on the victory of Norman's party, the conquerors and the vanquished withdrew together to the feast and the dance; and Ronald embraced Norman with tears in his eyes, and blessed the Lord "that one had arisen in Glenalbin to maintain the honour of the clan, and to show the lads from the other side of the hill what real play was."—Never was Norman so much endeared to the heart of Ronald as at this moment; and with an air of exultation, he kept spanning the wrist of the tall, blooming, and graceful boy, who, largely endowed with the enthusiastic feelings and glowing affections of

his countrymen, warmly returned the fondness of his venerable friend.

"Sure enough the lad is but slender; shooting up, as one may say, like a willow twig, yet show me in Glenalbin one of his years with such a bone," cried Ronald.—"And now, my dear boy, you are very learned, as I am told, in all manner of Saxon learning, which may be all very good, for what I know, seeing I know nothing about it; but do remember what I am telling you—keep such things in their proper place: for, after all comes to all, the man who putts the stone, throws the hammer, and takes the heath, the hill, and the water, all alike as they cast up,—with a warm heart, a fleet foot, and a strong arm,—that's the man!"—And to enforce his advice, Ronald, in the fulness of his triumph, added another cow to Norman's stock.

Moome had always had visions of future greatness for her favourite; but, from this distinguished day, they thicken'd round her. One night she dreamed of seeing him with the claymore of Macalbin; the next, all Macalbin's sons passed before her, and last came Norman, led by the Lady. When any very impressive vision had blest her slumbers, the boat was ordered for Eleenalin, and the Lady (who

hearkened to all her revelations with the most gratifying attention) was made the confidant of her expectations. The Lady would sigh and smile; and, gently checking the flights of Moome's fancy, lead her back to sad realities.

There is a custom of very remote antiquity still observed in the Hebrides and West Highlands, on the last night of the year. The Lady had ever declined going to Dunalbin on that occasion; but, as Moome and many of her neighbours would have been miserable, if the Lady did not eat of the cheese of the *Coolin*,*

* There is an imperfect account of this singular custom in Dr. Johnson's Tour. On the last night of the year, the gentlemen and men-servants are turned out of the house, and the females secure the doors. One of the men is decorated with a dried cow's hide, and is provided with cakes of barley, or oat-meal, and with cheese. He is called the COOLIN, and is belaboured with staves, and chased round the house by his roaring companions. To represent noise and tumult seems the principal object in this stage of the ceremony. The door is next attacked, and stout resistance made from within; nor is admission granted, till the assailant has shown that his savage nature is subdued by the influence of the humanizing muse. When he has repeated a few verses, the door flies open. Others rush in, but are repelled, till all have proved their fitness for civilized life. When the whole company are admitted, a new ceremony begins. A piece of dried sheep-skin, with the wool still on it, is singed in the fire, smelt to, and waved three times round the head. It is again and again singed, and waved, till every individual has three times held

she usually had a large party of the clan at Eleenalin; and the usual ceremony was followed by a ball.

Eagerly was the day anticipated which brought to these devoted clansmen all that now remained of the festal hall of their chiefs. And this year the sage and erudite Buchanan, tired of being always wise and solemn, joined in the Coolin, and ran braying round the house with the promiscuous crowd, and repeated a rhyme for admission like any other superstitious Highlander; only, indeed, that he was distinguished by his rhymes, which abounded in Gods and Goddesses, and classical allusions, which for the first time figured in Gaelic poetry. The rhymes of Hugh and Norman were of another character. They spoke of the fame of heroes, and of the scenes of their glory;—the glen of Albin was their Elysium; Lochuan, their Helicon; and their Olympus, the "*Hill of the close fight.*"

When every one had eaten of the cake and cheese of the Coolin, and gone through all

it to the fire, three times smelt to it, and nine times waved it round his head.—The bread and cheese of the COOLIN are next divided and eaten; and thus are the calamities of the expected year provided against.

the ceremonies requisite to prevent the calamities of the expected year, the ball was opened by Norman and Flora Buchanan, and the violin of the piper gave an electric impulse to the spirits of old and young. The Lady, thus surrounded, looked on with calm and chastened joy; and Moome, seated by her side, snapping her fingers in time with the lively Strathspey, declared that she was "almost as happy as she could have been in the hall of her Chief." Never, indeed, had the Lady beheld a gayer group assembled in the hall of her fathers;—never had she heard its lofty roof echo to mirth more heart-felt than that which shook her lonely cottage, when the electrifying shout of the Piper, from time to time, gave inspiration to the dancers.

As the springing, airy forms of Norman and Flora flitted before the eyes of Buchanan, it is probable that his mind reverted to the *millennium*, for, in the exultation of his heart, gesture and attitude appropriate, suiting the action to the word, he began to expatiate on its joys; and, not a little gratified by the polite attention of the Lady, he might have been betrayed, by the warmth of his feelings, into a discourse of most unconscionable length, had not one rushed in, "whose face was as a book where one

might read strange matters." It was Allan, the husband of Mary.

"Ay, dance,—dance your last!" he wildly exclaimed; "for you must leave Glenalbin!"—the music ceased, the dancers stopped.—"Leave Glenalbin!"—was echoed on every side in that deep despairing voice which issues from the heart.

But it was even so. The lease of these conjunct farmers expired at the following Whitsuntide. On learning that their modern landlord was spending the Christmas holidays at the seat of a gentleman about twenty miles distant, they had sent Allan to solicit its renewal, and had empowered him to offer such an advance of rent as must have doomed them to still greater penury and toil;—but it was luxury even to starve in Glenalbin!

The lease of Glenalbin had been for some months in the possession of a stranger, who was to cover with sheep that country where hundreds of human creatures had lived, and enjoyed life. The banishment of the last of the clan was now fixed and inevitable; and the tears and shrieks of the women; the deep and hopeless grief of the men; the wailings of feeble age, and helpless infancy; the dignified sorrow of Lady Augusta,—formed a

spectacle of woe which might have touched even the cold heart of him whose selfish luxury had produced misery so wide-spreading and extreme.

"Oh God!" thought Norman,—"since no man can have the right, why, why should he have the power to make hundreds miserable?" and he hid his face on the shoulder of Hugh, weeping over the fate of his countrymen.

Torn at once from home and country,—that delicate and mysterious union which connects the human mind with the scenes of its early joys, in a moment rudely dissolved!—every cherished association which had imperceptibly twined round the heart, binding it to home and happiness, severed at once from that bleeding heart!—driven forth from the place where the ashes of their fathers reposed, that spot hallowed by every affection which is sacred in death, or endearing in life,—exiled to a new world, a land of strange speech, in whose vast territory the remnant of Macalbin's clan would be swallowed up like a drop of water in the extended ocean!——Pride, patriotism, regret, home, and a thousand painful feelings, combined to agonize the bosoms of the wretched emigrants.

When the first paroxysms of grief had

abated, this insulated community began to think of their future destination, and means of life. The Highlanders, with much less present comfort than the peasants of England, or the Lowland Scots, have always more property. The custom of portioning daughters is common, and assisting in the establishment of sons. A sum is also hoarded for a splendid funeral; and as they are somewhat in the habit of looking before and after, they are seldom reduced, by their own improvidence, to that sudden dependance and beggary which sometimes overtakes their neighbours. Their stock of cattle, and the small funds hoarded for purposes so honourable, were now a disposable capital. Much depended on its prudent application, and many consultations were held. A condition similar to that which habit had rendered dear, and almost necessary, appeared most desirable. Many little colonies of Highlanders were scattered over the continent of America. One of these little knots of clansmen was now settled on the banks of the Mohawk river. It consisted of people who had been driven out from Kenanowen and Dunulladale, the south side of Glenalbin, many years before this period. In that desolate tract, now turned into plantations and sheep-walks, fifty smokes

had been put out in one morning. The affections of the Highlanders naturally pointed to the spot inhabited by their kinsmen and former friends; and as some rich, though uncultivated land, was still on sale, Allan was sent out to America as the agent of the emigrants.

These arrangements were all conducted by the Lady. Lady Augusta detested war,—its spirit, its institutions, and not unfrequently its object. The days of clanship were gone; and she saw what was termed martial spirit, and enthusiasm of glory, as powerfully excited, and as bravely exerted, in the basest, as in the most just and honourable cause. The army appeared to her a poor resource for a Highlander,—a poor exchange for the glen of his fathers, domestic joys, and kindred charities;—the freedom of the citizen, and perhaps the virtues of the man. But, admitting war to be ever so fine, and ever so glorious,—the spirit-stirring drum and the martial pipe, and fame and victory, ever so animating,—neither old men, nor women or children, can be soldiers. Now, the greater part of the inhabitants of Dunalbin consisted of these helpless and beloved beings, dependant in a great measure on those who were welcomed to glory, and tacitly told, that, though driven from their paternal fields, an-

other field was opened, where they might toil, and fight, and bleed, in defence of the lives, properties, and freedom, of those who had torn them from all they loved. Lady Augusta wished to see her countrymen remain in their own land, to live and prosper in its prosperity; or, if necessary, to die in its defence. But this was not permitted; and she conceived it of more importance that men should live in freedom and in comfort, than in this, or that degree of latitude.

The dark lanes of a manufacturing town appeared even worse than the army. The present generation of Highlanders could never be made manufacturers, and her generous heart revolted at the idea of her high-spirited countrymen sinking into the abject condition of hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to a people they had hitherto shunned and despised. —America opened her arms to the exiles of Scotland!—Much of hardship was to be encountered, many cherished feelings were to be sacrificed; but Lady Augusta indulged a well-founded and cheering hope, that the honest pride of property, the advantage of a rich soil, and, above all, a free government, would, in that land of the exile, abundantly compensate

her expatriated clansmen for all they were forced to abandon.

The emigrants vainly solicited the Lady to accompany them across the Atlantic, to continue their lawgiver and their judge. Eleenalin had never been estranged from her family; the graves of her ancestors were still her property, and that little island the world which bounded her wishes. Moome and the Piper devoted themselves to the fortunes of their ancient mistress; and the inhabitants of Dunalbin erected for each a separate hut, which, with the central cottage of the Lady, formed three sides of a square in the little retiring bay of Lochuan. Norman, the adopted son of Lady Augusta, was another member of this solitary establishment. Hitherto he had believed himself the son of a distant relative of Lady Augusta, and her entire silence had confirmed his delusion. She had long, in defiance of her judgment, preserved the painful secret of his birth, still fostering a latent hope, that something might transpire to soften the calamity of the youth, feeling himself at once an orphan, and a dependant on those to whose blood he was a stranger. But concealment was no longer justifiable; yet fearfully and reluctantly did the Lady introduce this sorrowful theme.—She

spoke of her extreme age, of her deserted condition, and the solitude to which the emigration must consign the remaining period of her life. She hoped that Norman would remain in Eleenalin as her stay and comfort, the support of her downward years. She could not leave the ashes of her fathers; in Eleenalin she awaited that immortality to which her mind had long been directed, on which all her hopes were placed.—Alarmed and uneasy, Norman often attempted to interrupt the Lady. He felt that she ought not to have doubted of his willingness to devote himself to her, and that she should have known, that nothing on earth could tempt the child of her bounty to abandon her old age to the desertion and solitude she painted. But the swelling of his heart prevented utterance; he could only bathe the hand he held in tears of gratitude and affection. Lady Augusta perceived all the generous emotions of his heart.

"Noble and generous was he whose name you bear," said she; "Norman, twin-brother of my soul! the heaven which early claimed thee as its own, has bestowed on me this precious child. From the hand of Mercy have I received thee, last cherished blessing of a desolate heart.—No! thou wilt never leave me:

the presentiment of my heart was true;—thou, my second son, the child of my love, of my prayers, and of my cares, was sent to pillow my aged head, to soothe my aged sorrow, to make glad the childless and the widow. Yes, Norman, thou art all to me now;—the staff of my age. When the name of Augusta shall long have been forgotten among the sons of her people, they will still remember, with blessings, the friend of thy orphan childhood."—The Lady then cautiously informed him of the sad circumstances attending his birth, and of the fate of his mother. Norman stood, the mute inbreathed image of hopeless sorrow, with his glaring eyes fixed upon her. Had new worlds arisen at his bidding, Norman could not have articulated one word; till the Lady, alarmed by his wild appearance, hastily gave him the picture found in the possession of his mother. He gazed on it with deep and sorrowful attention.

"I will seek him through the world!" he at last exclaimed. "Oh! the luxury of one embrace from a father!—But I have no father! —among the myriads that people the globe, no heart claims affinity with Norman."

"Norman, my son, does your heart then

disown me?—Never, oh! never, was child more tenderly loved."

"Forgive me, Lady;—my mother, my friend, my all—forgive me, pity me, for my heart is bursting."

He hid his face on the shoulder of his venerable friend, he shed his sorrows on her bosom; and she led him forth to the grave of his mother. It was that spot which had so often excited his infantine curiosity, the scene of many a childish frolic.

"How often," cried Norman, "have I frolicked around this spot, while she to whom I owe my existence mouldered beneath, cold, cold, and forgotten. Oh! Lady, that I too lay here, for I feel that I shall never again be happy!"—and he threw himself on the grave.

"Norman, my love, you shall long be happy; you are but entering the threshold of life."

"My tears have fallen on its threshold, Lady;—it is darkened by a mother's misery."

The Lady, who believed that afflictions are sent for good, and that there is a smiling face hid behind the darkest providence, endeavoured to point out their uses to her young friend, and to lead his mind to the source of all consolation. Yet she said little; he listened in silence, and she left him to deepen, in sorrowful

reflection, the impression she had made on his young mind. A lesson of piety so given was not soon to be forgotten; yet the mind of Norman, young, impetuous, strong for suffering, clung to the cause of its grief, and was jealous of suffering too tamely, or too briefly. Night brought new horrors to his fancy. He started from distracting visions, which represented his mother pale and haggard, supported in the arms of Ronald, or leaning her unsheltered head on the ivy-cliff, a homeless, wretched being. The howling of the blast rose on his ear, mingled with her dying groans. He started up; big drops of perspiration stood on his forehead; he paced the chamber in phrenzied agitation, and blest the first beam of the day which closed this night of horrors.—But the young and buoyant mind of Norman gradually became tranquil. He had much to love, though he was robbed of much;—time imperceptibly stole the first vivid glow from the harsh colouring of sorrow, and, mellowing into those soft hues which mark pensive dejection, it sweetly harmonized with all the gentler sensibilities of his nature.

Often would he gaze for hours on the resemblance of him he ventured to call father; gaze, till imagination, rebelling against the evidence

of sense, gave life and motion to the inanimate features. A short, soft sigh dispelled the illusion; and the picture was laid aside till another opportunity occurred for the indulgence of this solitary enjoyment. In the meanwhile, every preparation was making for the purposed emigration; and spring advanced, decorating Glenalbin with new charms, as if to render the pang of separation more poignant.

CHAP. XI.

"Alas, what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
Which called them from their native walks away,
When the poor exiles, ev'ry pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last;
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And, shudd'ring still to cross the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep."

GOLDSMITH.

THE Highlanders go up to the summer shealings in the remote glens, about the first of May, and do not return till Lammas. These pilgrimages are always begun very early in the morning, that the cattle may not be annoyed by the heats of noon. The children, who depend on milk for the most of their nourishment, always follow the cattle to the shealings, and contribute not a little to enliven and endear these joyous processions. To see, in the *clear-obscure* dawn of a May morning, herds of domestic animals, slowly winding up a Highland glen,

to view the wild flight and return of happy childhood,—to hear the young women singing their pastoral strains, as they carry their rude dairy utensils, and the young men chiming in the chorus, as they guide the cattle, and lead forward their little picturesque horses, laden with rustic goods,—to behold all these, and many other pleasing circumstances, appropriate to such a scene of peacefulness, is delightful indeed to a feeling mind. Often had Lady Augusta viewed this pastoral spectacle, and recalled the age of love and innocence,—the plains of Mamre, and the herds of Laban.

It was now the first of May. The morning was still, warm, and dewy. Norman saw the last blue smoke that would ever rise from the hamlet of Dunalbin, slowly ascending in the liquid and balmy air of that lovely morning,—for the dreaded day had arrived! A soft shower had fallen in the night, and lucid drops twinkled on every bud, and bathed every blossom; the birds flitted from bough to bough, quivering their wings with excess of life, and bursting into songs of joy; the wild swan was sporting on the lake, and the wild duck leading out her young family; the first note of the cuckoo came floating down the glen. Over the head of that glen the sun was rising beautifully, throw-

ing his slant beams athwart the green slope on which hung the hamlet, and slowly drawing up the thin curtain of mist which floated around the mountains. That spirit of joy, and freshness, and inspiration, peculiar to the hour of sunrise, and the animating season of spring, was diffused through the air;—nature wore her first bright bloom, and the invigorated soul of man was awakened to all the bliss of existence. Again and again was heard "the voice of spring among the trees,"—the cheering note of the cuckoo. Moome heard that note, but superstition drew no augur; there was little more to fear, there was nothing more to hope;—the emigrants had surrendered themselves to decided misery. And now the sun had dispersed the light wreaths of mist which hung on the cliffs, and unfolded all the beauties of Glenalbin. Beautiful was this pastoral valley, even to the eye of the dullest stranger; but, oh! how inexpressibly dear and lovely to that people, to whom every cliff, and cavern, and copse, and stream, told a tale so wild and remote, or tender and overcoming, or inspiring and glorious! —CLAN-ALBIN alone could feel and appropriate all the charms of their *storied* glen. To them, at every advancing step, on this side and on that, started up the records of former triumphs,

and the monuments of departed glory! What, to the cold and tearless eye of a stranger, the castle of the chief, the rock of the gathering, the hill of the beal-fire, the grey stone of the humble dead, and the gathered heap of the fallen hero!

But these were the relicks from which they were to tear themselves,—this the glen, whose every echo was now ringing,—

"*We return, we return, we return no more!*" *

* This is a wild desponding strain, sung or played by the Highlanders on leaving their country. Verses, expressive of local regret, are adapted to this melody by the inhabitants of different districts. This very popular national lament, wailing and devious, may to some appear of small value as a piece of music; yet it possesses a soul-harrowing, indescribable influence over the feelings of Highlanders. It is, indeed, the appropriate

"Lament of men
That languish for their native glen."

It is the "Flowers of the Forest" of the Low Country, and the "Rans des Vaches" of the Swiss mountaineers;—but it is still more. With it Highlanders of every rank and clan have the most interesting associations.

The great bulk of the Highlanders, at least in these degenerate days, appear to have little sensibility to the exquisite beauty of their national melodies, considered merely as pieces of music. To them their charm arises solely from powerful associations: yet music, both instrumental and vocal, is uni-

The exiles were already assembled; they had taken their last meal, they had beheld the extinguishment of the domestic fire,—the demolition of the altars of their household gods. They had commenced their journey; mothers were seen clasping their babes in their arms, and mingling tears with caresses; while the fathers were helping forward the tottering steps of children, whose little limbs could ill sustain the fatigue of travelling, though they had often wandered whole days through the wilds of

versally loved and cultivated. The national music of the Highlander melts his heart, or gives glee to his motions, but does not tingle his ears. A person, whose musical taste is in any degree cultivated, must be shocked at the rapid, strange, and ungraceful manner, in which the Highland girls sing the most pathetic of their airs, when singing singly; and they, on the other hand, are disgusted with what they think the drawling expression of those who sing them in a better style. Yet the rowing-songs, the songs at the *waulkings*, at the *quern*, or round a kelp-kiln, and, in short, all that cheer social labour, and heighten social enjoyment, have a picturesque, and highly pleasing effect.

There is a higher species of lyric known in the Highlands, the power of which no one can understand, who has not felt the rush of clannish blood. These *hymns* to departed greatness are designated by a particular name. The only one of them (so far as I know) that has found its way into English, is in the notes to "The Lady of the Lake." It is the *hymn*, if I may so call it, of the Chief of Clan-gillian. No company, of the name of Maclean, could sing that dirge without

Glenalbin. Young women, weeping as they went, supported the steps of feeble age, whose querulous sorrow was mournfully expressed.

This slow-moving procession was no joyous pastoral pilgrimage to the summer *shealing*. It was indeed a heart-rending spectacle: at every succeeding step some object started up to endear Glenalbin, some lovely scene of infant sports, or youthful loves, rose smiling on every hand, to embitter the pang of separation. They had reached the rustic cemetry belong-

such transports of enthusiastic grief, as would appear quite inexplicable to a cold-blooded Saxon. I have often fancied something inexpressibly sweet and soothing, even in the strange *voluntaries* with which Highland women lull their children to sleep; and even these baby-songs and lullabies are indicative of the strongest feature of the national character—pride of birth. I cannot presume to translate any of these effusions, which are probably alike silly in every language, and alike *untranslatable*. I recollect one of them, which is in very common use, and goes on,

> "Sleep my daughter, my darling, my daughter,
> MACLEOD and MACCALLAN are your kinsmen;
> Sleep my daughter, my darling, &c. &c.
> MACDONALD and MACLEAN are your kinsmen," &c. &c.

And all the Highland chiefs are strung up in a rude rhyme, with abundant terms of endearment, and declared to be kinsmen to the nursling; and, when the list is run over, it is again and again begun. Now, if a Highland child won't sleep upon that, it surely deserves to be whipped. I shall put an end to

ing to the hamlet. It was bordered by the rude path which wound up the glen, and its opposite boundary was the lake. Here they made an involuntary pause: grief burst forth afresh, and each threw himself on the grave of the parent, the child, or the brother, to pour forth the last tribute of affection,—to pull the wild-flowers that grew on the hallowed sod, that, in a strange land, they might be preserved, and loved, and wept over; and valued far beyond all its pomp of floral beauty. Afflic-

this rambling note with an anecdote, which, though trifling, is somewhat illustrative of the Highland character.

A boy, from his appearance about six or seven years of age, was coming on a message to the house of a gentleman, and was met, at a short distance from the door, by a large swine. An animal of the size, in a part of the country where they are rare, must have been very alarming to a child of his years, and he betrayed many symptoms of terror. An English, or Low-country boy would, in such circumstances, either boldly have fought his way, or run off; but the little Highlander did neither. Assuming a very soft and caressing tone of voice, and throwing a strange mixture of respect and complacency into his perturbed countenance, he cautiously sidled past the swine, complimenting her all the while on her high birth, and landed property.—"Madam yourself the sow, all M——h is yours! all Q——h is yours, Madam yourself the sow! *Machallan* is your own cousin, Madam yourself the sow!" and with this flattery he got safely past, and took refuge in the house.

Machallan is the name by which his Grace the Duke of Argyle is known among the clans.

tion had now reached its acmé,—the last tie was severed which bound them to Glenalbin: Yet long, long they lingered,—and then slowly and silently proceeded.

The grief of Norman was lively and distracting:—Mary, the gentle being who had protected his infancy,—Ronald, the good old man!—every little sharer of his infant sports, and every young companion of his boyish enterprizes,—never again to be beheld,—all torn at once from the clinging embrace!

Mary fondly lingered, leaning heavily on the arm of Norman, who carried her little bundle; and they mingled their tears in silence till the exiles had reached the Ivy-cliff, where Ronald stopped to take a last farewell!—"He would leave the boy where he had found his mother."—All the party repeated the same melancholy ceremony, and he was again left alone with Mary. They sat down together at the base of the cliff, and she drew from her bosom the long ringlet of hair which she had taken from the corpse of his mother. Norman pressed it to his lips, and his heart; "Mother! Mother!" was the cry of the bereaved orphan, who, at that moment, thought only of a mother's suffering. Mary, in silence, cut a rich glossy curl from the head of "her dark-haired

darling," to replace that which she had given away.

And now the emigrants had reached the "crag of yews," where an angle of the mountains must hide the glen for ever from their sight. They again paused to take a last look, —a last farewell of Glenalbin! Hugh blew a few notes of that air so agonizing to the feelings of exiled Highlanders. It thrilled on the inmost pulse of Norman's heart:—He flung his arms around his "little mother;"—it was a last, a severing embrace! He darted rapidly back towards the glen,—threw himself in agony on the grass, and again started hastily up, lest affection should miss the *last look*; —the *last look*, so cherished by the tender heart; on which memory fondly lingers, when years on years have revolved, and all else is forgotten. Impressive, indeed, was that last look;—years rolled away, and it was still present to Norman. Women, half kneeling and weeping; men stretching forth their arms, as if to embrace, for the last time, the glen of their fathers; every attitude and every movement expressive of strong passion and vehement sorrow.—Norman turned away his head, and, when he looked again, they were all gone! and a faint swell of female voices rose on the

air, wailing, "*We return, we return, we return no more!*"

Slowly did Norman wind round the lake, shunning the deserted hamlet with that delicacy which the wounded heart involuntarily displays towards itself; and sadly did he rejoin the aged and solitary inhabitants of Eleenalin.

The emigrants had taken leave of the Lady on the preceding evening, when she visited the clan for the last time. It was a solemn scene. On each individual did she bestow her energetic benediction; and standing up, surrounded by her clansmen, she prayed, "That the God of their fathers would be their guide on the deep waters, and in the land of the stranger! That the Lord God of Israel, who, with his pillar of fire and of cloud, had led his people through the wilderness, would go forth with the remnant of her race to the strange land whither they journeyed." They lamented, and bitterly wept; and the Lady likewise wept, but was silent.

When Norman returned to the island, he found the Lady gently comforting the disconsolate Moome. She intreated him to seek repose, as he had watched all night with Mary. Their common loss was still too recent

for conversation; and he gladly retired, and leaned on his sleepless couch till evening.

When he rose, he found that the Lady had walked out, and he intended to follow her. The evening was glowing and balmy. The rich tints of gold and purple which illumined the western sky were reflected by the waters of the lake with mellowed and magic lustre: a rosy light was effused on every pendant cliff, and waving tree, pictured on its smooth bosom. Moome sat on a low stool in the woodbine porch, trying to spin. Norman, with folded arms, leaned against an old elm that grew near the door of the cottage, and strove to give his mind to the lovely scene around him. Something still was wanting; involuntarily he turned his eye to the hamlet; he looked for its curling smoke, he listened for the doubling clink of Ronald's hammer; for the hum of infant voices, or the song at the evening-fold, which, in such an evening, might be distinctly heard across the lake. All was still. It was a stillness which chilled the heart, and froze all the pulses of life.

" I have seen the blue smokes of Glenalbin," said Moome, " rising every morning for fourscoure and ten years. This morning I

looked, and they were all gone out!"—She sighed deeply, and a long pause followed.

A *mavis*, that sweet songster of the Scotish glens, was perched on a neighbouring birch tree, cheering his mate with a "soft land" song, and awakening all the fairy echoes of Eleenalin. Moome looked mournfully round. —"O well may *you* sing," cried she; "you still make your nest in Glenalbin!"—Norman burst into tears, and darted away, his indignant spirit soaring beyond the passions of a boy, as, in bitterness of soul, he cursed the mercenary temper which had exiled his countrymen.

On the following day, the Piper returned to his Lady; he had escorted his clansmen to their first stage. He talked to Moome of their parting; and, in a few days, Norman and the Lady joined in the conversation.

But Hugh hung his pipe against the wall, and many, many months elapsed, ere he could draw a single note from it. Even then Norman fancied it still sounded—"*We return no more;*"—and during many months, nothing was heard of the emigrants; but at last Allan wrote, and they learned that their feelings were enviable, when compared with those of the expatriated band. It was Glenalbin, it was the

blue and distant mountains that sheltered their home,—it was the rugged shores of Alybin, and the last of her isles, to which their hearts clung in melancholy succession. Allan simply described these feelings, and the grief of Norman was renewed.

But, by the end of the winter, they had so far recovered their tranquillity, that Moome sung to the Lady all the particulars of the emigration in Gaelic verse of her own composition; and Hugh played a pipe tune which he had composed, and called—"*The Departing Day.*" It was a wild, irregular, but very plaintive strain, and to it was adapted the first effusion of Norman's muse, entitled —"*A Farewell to Kenanowen;*"—Dunalbin was a theme too delicate even for the language of song.

A FAREWELL TO KENANOWEN.

CALEDONIA ! my country, for ever adieu !
And adieu, Kenanowen, thy mountains so blue !
Tho' rude, yet beloved, from thy shades we are torn,
And in sadness we go, for we never return.
As light shall the breeze wave thy blossoms and bowers,
As soft shall the gale kiss thy wild mountain flowers,
As bright mid thy heaths shall the wild-berries glow,
As clear through thy valleys the hill-torrents flow ;
But banished the race who would doat on thy charms,
Who would love thee in peace, and defend thee in arms.
  No sound, Kenanowen, is heard in thy glade !
All is silent and sad as the sleep of the dead,
Save the howl of the hill-fox, the raven's hoarse wail,
Which start the lone echoes of Dunulladale !
Why wakes not the horn of the hunter of deer ?
Why flows not the song of thy daughters so fair ?—
Ah ! ne'er shall their whispers breathe soft mid thy rocks,
Nor thy gales, Eleenalin, sigh in their dark locks.
  Thou loved Eleenalin ! green gem of the wave !
Where the Chiefs of the Clan find the rest of the brave ;
What pensive enthusiast shall lean in thy shade,
To weep, and to worship the ghosts of the dead ?—
Ah ! ne'er shall the harp to the breeze give their name,
Nor the song of the bard tell the deeds of their fame.
With the clan of my fathers, O who could compare ?
Ever matchless in peace, and resistless in war ;—
But past all our triumphs, our glory is fled,
And the voice of our fame only tells of the dead !
Thou moon, that now lean'st on the wild Craig-na-rue,
Unheeded thy beams shall our wanderings pursue ;

For ne'er will they play o'er thy hills, Kenanowen,
Nor brighten the scenes where our glory was known.
Caledonia! oft dyed with our forefathers' blood,
When their souls claimed the right, and their swords made it good;
When they rushed from their mountains with dirk and clay-more,
A rampart of fire round thy rock-girdled shore,—
For ever farewell!—from thy shades we are torn,
And in sadness we go,—for we never return!

CHAP. XII.

"How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle, and who justly in return
Esteems that busy world an idler too!
*   *   *   *
He that attends to his interior self;
That has a heart, and keeps it; has a mind
That hungers, and supplies it; and who seeks
A social, not a dissipated life,—
Has business."

COWPER.

THAT part of Norman's education which Buchanan superintended, was now finished. He returned no more to Ballyruag, but Flora Buchanan fixed her residence in Eleenalin, for the benefit of the Lady's instructions in those female accomplishments that were deemed necessary for her condition.

Lady Augusta originally intended to give her adopted son a medical education, and from her slender annuity had long been making provision for that purpose. But the emigration intervened, and the Lady, who valued money only as the instrument of benevolence,

and expended it in the way likely to produce most good, gave that sum to the necessities of her poor neighbours, which had been set apart to train her young friend to a liberal profession. As it now was, she was in no haste to launch her pupil into the world. He was still very young, and she perceived that he had a strong bias to a military life. Arms was not the profession the Lady coveted for Norman, yet none other was open to his hopes; and she flattered herself that his principles would preserve him from the dangerous impressions to which the young soldier is always exposed; and that talent and integrity would enable him to rise in the army, though destitute alike of interest or fortune. For some years after her retreat from the busy haunts of life, Lady Augusta had been visited by the neighbouring gentry; but a new race had now sprung up, who knew not "The Lady," consequently her interest was as slender as her acquaintances were few; yet she might have procured him an opportunity of entering on the profession he panted after thus early. But, to leave him to himself at so tender an age,—or rather to expose his unsuspecting innocence to the contagion of evil example, without one friend to direct,—with moral ha-

bits still unformed, and those stronger powers of the mind which prove the guardian of honour, and the guide of conduct, still undeveloped,—Lady Augusta shrunk from the rash experiment.

Educated amongst a martial people, and taught to consider arms as [illegible] profession worthy of a gentleman destitute of fortune, Norman felt an early and strong vocation to *glory*. His first lessons had been the military exercise; while yet a child, he had been an ideal soldier; the splendid habit of him he fondly called father was military; and all pointed one way. Yet, with all the impatient ardour incident to his age and character,—with all his impassioned desire to rush into life and action, he cheerfully submitted to the will of her whom it was his happiness to obey. She said that he was too young to be left alone; and Norman felt that she was too aged to be consigned to solitude.

But the present carelessness of his life was not without design on the part of his enlightened protectress. Hugh was his companion in field sports; and on the hills and moors of his country, he was inured to the toils he might hereafter encounter in its defence. By the same universal genius, he was instructed in

music. On the violin, he played the wild, devious, heart-breathing strains of his native mountains, with exquisite feeling; into them his soul was transfused. This, indeed, was a talent he possessed in common with many a poor Highlander: for in every farm of the Isles and much the Highlands, some tuneful enthusiast may still be found, who has had no instructor save ardent feeling, and native taste. Music, which, in wealthy societies, is the elegant occupation of the rich and great, is here the amusement of the lowly. In the former, it is chiefly cultivated by females; here, by the men, but from the same motive in both,—abundant leisure, and a certain degree of refinement. In no northern country is music so generally cultivated.

Lady Augusta, whom long residence abroad had given an intimate acquaintance with several continental languages, became the assistant of Norman in mastering their first difficulties. The witchery of Ariosto, and the sublimity of Corneille, did the rest. Norman, who had abundance of youthful ambition, and a peculiarly active imagination, was also a painter; but in this difficult and delightful art, he had no aid, no guide, save a lively fancy, rectified by the highly cultivated taste of Lady Augusta,

and the inspiration caught from views of nature in her most striking attitudes. But reading, *social* reading, was the charm of the domestic evening,—“ gleaning the spoils of time,”—the most delightful occupation of the young mountaineer. The Lady had nothing which deserved the pompous name of [illegible]; but she had an excellent collection of books, the better perhaps, that her means of procuring this, her only luxury, were extremely limited, and that much thought was employed in selecting. The early misfortunes, and consequent habitudes of her life, had made books necessary to her comfort; and if ever the equable and all-enduring spirit of this hard-fated woman was ruffled by trivial matters,—if ever she was betrayed, by personal feelings, into any censure of the expensive tastes of the age, it was when luxury precluded her favourite indulgence, and pursued her in the shape of broad margins, and all those typographical and other embellishments, which make modern publications accessible only to the wealthy. She could not forbear to protest against the taste, which tries to degrade the intellectual treasures of mankind to the level of furniture and equipments for the ignorant and ostentatious. It was perhaps a very natural taste, which made the Archbishop

of Grenada delight in seeing his homilies written out in a fine and fair hand; but it would have been most alarming to other people, had any one else cared about them.

Happily, however, for Lady Augusta, the best books are also the lowest in price:—and still more much her the purest and most lasting pleasures are those which are open to all men; the sweets of the domestic affections, the ever-varying, exhaustless, and cheap delights, that flow from a cultivated taste. The elements of beauty, and grandeur, and happiness, were profusely scattered around the inhabitants of Eleenalin; and they possessed that exquisite mental perception, which can discover, select, and arrange; and find pleasure in each nicely adapted part, and rapture in every harmonious combination. They were poor, it is true, if those can ever be called so, who possess the magical power of extracting good from every thing, and in all things perceiving beauty. Can they indeed be truly poor, to whom belongs the wide charter "that appropriates all it sees?"—"The stranger," it is true, possessed the mountains, and the woods, and the streams of Glenalbin; but what was the vulgar claim of the distant stranger? He possessed,—but they alone enjoyed, who could cast around the

glance of taste and feeling,—who could lift to heaven the eye of devotion, and say,—

"My Father made them all."

As the Lady could never hope to endow Norman with the gif[illegible] she was doubly anxious largely to endow him with better, and more imperishable riches; and by her wise and generous cares, without being either a miracle of wit, or a prodigy of learning, he grew up with a manly and ingenuous mind, a warm and candid heart; and, as his distinguishing characteristic, a fine enthusiasm for his country, and his countrymen,—for truth, for nature, and simplicity.

The sequestered islanders lived in the most harmonious union, which was never disturbed except by some affair of precedence between the *Nurse* and the *Piper*:—for Moome made a point of considering "her who suckled Macalbin's son with her own milk," as a much more important personage than Macalbin's piper,—or a disputed point of genealogy, which Moome would not yield to Lady Augusta herself. But these altercations were never carried to any height, for Moome was rather jealous of the privileges of her high station, than desirous of individual power; and

Hugh humbled himself as became him, for Moome "was his own aunt, and also his own half cousin by the mother's side, and his third cousin by the father's side," and he loved her. Besides, she remembered before he was [illegible]orn; —"[illegible]so, [illegible] [illegible]best right to know,— *him?—*[illegible] *[illegible]er?*

To every one was allotted his own department. The Lady was Queen of the island, and Moome was prime minister, and Flora, who still resided in Eleenalin, and sung like a Muse, and danced like a Fairy, and spun almost as well as Moome herself,—Flora was the notable workwoman of the little community, and Hugh was *fac-totum*; and as for the maid-servant—Moome herself was forced to confess, that "she did very well, *considering* that, after all, she was one of the Macdonnels of Glengary," a crime Moome could hardly pardon. Norman alone had no ostensible business: he could only lighten or share the labours of his friends.

No state of existence is, however, without some mixture of alloy. Moome, who perpetually carried on manufactures of coarse linen, and tartan, and *clo*, was often meeting with perverse accidents. And the Lady perceived that it would be cheaper to purchase these

stuffs; and besides, she hated the bustle of spinning, and carding, and winding, and warping. But, without such displays of good housewifery, Moome would have thought herself idle and useless, and so have been miserable: and the Lady could submit to any inconvenience rather than that Moome should be miserable. Then, when Hugh went with *clews* to the weaver, or to the smithy to have the spade mended, Hugh, who was the most social of all beings, would stay very long; and when a letter came from the emigrants, he would wander over the country for days together, to communicate the glad tidings; and still made a practice of attending every wedding or funeral he could hear of. Besides, he still retained all his original fondness for *small childer*, still laid out his odd pence on mouldy gingerbread, and still made little stools and shinnys. He was consequently a welcome guest in every solitary hamlet that the gripe of monopoly had spared. The evening which brought "Uncle Hugh" and his pipe, brought mirth and pleasure in its train; and the hut where he took his potatoes and heath couch, was honoured by his presence.

Yet Hugh was the most active member of the little community; he possessed the uni-

versal talents of his countrymen. Hugh could brew ale, and distil whisky *con amore;* he could tan hides, and make brogues, and build boats and huts, and twist osier baskets of all kinds. Indeed, with any odd piece of wood and his *whittle*, Hugh could make any thing, or rather a substitute for any thing; and to the ingenuity of Robinson Crusoe, he united the docility of his man Friday. Then, Hugh raised an annual crop of potatoes, and cut the natural grass on the island to make hay, and managed the garden, and Moome's flax field, and worked and mended fishing nets, and practised a hundred other mechanic arts. In brief, to use his own phrase, Hugh could "turn his hand to any thing;" though it must be acknowledged, that he in general preferred doing nothing, unless it was roving over the hills in quest of game, or blowing his pipe in an evening, "to make the place sound like Dunalbin."

Insulated as was the family of the Lady, she was not condemned to absolute solitude. Her visitors, indeed, were not among the rich, the gay, and the fashionable; but the sick came to Eleenalin for medicine and advice, and the unhappy for consolation. Wherever there are poor Highlanders left, there is still kindness,

gratitude, and unbounded veneration for high birth. During the spring and summer months, many poor Macalbin women would come from very distant places to visit the Lady: each with her little offering of humble, unbribed, unbought kindness;—game, or fowls, or eggs; the berries of the juniper or arbutus; or, if every thing failed, they brought Hugh various roots Highlanders are accustomed to chew instead of tobacco.—A Highlander will suffer any privation, for the pleasure of presenting some little gift to his superior; girls will often expend the greater part of their wages in presents to their mistresses and their families; and servants very frequently leave the children of their master heirs to the saving they may have amassed, in the long and faithful service of the family. Lady Augusta loved to encourage this kindly intercourse; it was among the last relicks of a better age; and she returned the symbols of affection presented to her, with such cheap and useful gifts as might keep alive generous feeling, without stimulating avarice. The chief value of her gifts was, that she bestowed them. Women are always the agents in the endearing intimacy thus kept up between the lowly and the exalted. They have more delicacy of feeling, a nicer sense of propriety, and more ease and gracefulness in expressing

attachment. A Highland gentleman gives his hand to his *namesake*, however lowly, and freely converses with him without doors, where the levee is always held; but females, however dissimilar their rank, never meet nor separate without the most cordial embraces, and tender demonstrations of affection.

When the Lady had conversed long and intimately with these humble visitors, inquired into all the details of their family affairs, said all that was kind and fitting, and seen them take the *tea*, which is the rare and much esteemed treat on such occasions, she would consign them to the care of Moome. And in her hut they would sit from evening till dawn, conversing on all that was once most dear; weeping over the fate of expatriated clansmen, gentlemen of the country fallen in battle, or respectable families dispersed, in consequence of the new system of farming, and dwindled into insignificance. Many an early-fated and gallant soldier, who has long been banished from the memory of great and fashionable relations by the hard-hearted bustle of the world, has still a being in the warm and faithful hearts of his Moome, his *cho-alt*, and his poor clansman.

To persons delighting in society, and now nearly cut off from its pleasures,—skilled in all the arts which enliven social intercourse, and

in many of the graces by which it is embellished, nights of this kind were peculiarly precious. They were the dearest luxury of Moome and the Piper. Spinning, and carding, and piping, were all forgotten;—sleep was unthought of, and the night was devoted to the "joy of grief." Matters of immediate and temporary interest naturally occupied those who now so seldom met, yet the darling prejudices and fictions of a Highlander are so intimately blended with all his associations, that loftier themes would often intervene, and self-complacency would borrow from the splendid hues of the past, to smooth or embellish the ruggedness of the present, and to illuminate the darkness of the future.

But the grey dawn would terminate these stolen pleasures. The visitor would then return to her distant home, having first, perhaps, received a *charm* from Moome for her cattle or her children, and having bedewed the graves of her kinsmen, in the burying-ground of Dunalbin, with the tears of no ungrateful sorrow.

Sometimes, too, a funeral from a great distance would be brought to the now desolate glen;—those who, connected with Clan-Albin, had made it a dying and last request to be buried in Glenalbin, that they might sleep with their fathers, and rise up to judgment and

mercy, in a future state, surrounded by all they had loved in this.

All these events, though trifling in the world's esteem, diversified the life of the islanders, and prevented that stagnation in the flow of the social affections, which is the worst effect of solitude. Norman also sometimes met old school-fellows, and former companions, in his hunting excursions on the moors; and, while Flora resided at Eleenalin, every Saturday brought Buchanan and the newspaper, and gave rise to a long, and somewhat tedious discourse, "on the signs of the times;" for he was still a zealous commentator, still making war on the Pope, and defaming Lady Babylon. He would also gravely rebuke various opinions held by Moome and the Piper, which "smacked strongly of Popery;" and often checked that propensity to "profane swearing," particularly by the Virgin, which many good Presbyterians still practise in the Isles, and in that part of the Highlands.* The conversation of

* Among the many relicks of Popery still extant among the remote Highlanders, are their oaths. The common oath of the natives of Mull, Coll, Tyrie, &c. is "By Mary." The people of Sky swear by "The Book itself," meaning the Bible; those of Lewis by "The Great Sabbath;" and almost every district has its peculiar oath.

Highlanders is, indeed, much more bold and exclamatory than that of their neighbours in the Low-country; and, if their lively exclamations may be termed swearing, men, women, and children, are all alike obnoxious to Buchanan's censure.

The islanders were indeed little versed in the refinements of Calvinism, though they were by no means aware of their own deficiencies; and Buchanan often turned up his eyes, at hearing "such notions in a land of light." Long arguments consequently ensued; or rather dogmatical assertions on the one side, and warm exclamations on the other. Moome and the Piper denied the imputation of Catholicism, for the Chief had converted the whole glen one Sunday morning, by dismissing the priest, and driving them to the Presbyterian minister with a *yellow-stick*; * yet they affirmed, that sufferings in this life would abrogate future punishment, had no small reliance on "works," persisted in giving alms in sickness, to purchase the prayers of the poor, and firmly believed, notwithstanding all Buchanan could affirm, that certain relicks, in the possession of Moome, could cure all manner of

* Religion of the yellow-stick. Vide Dr Johnson's Tour.

diseases, though their politeness would not permit them to give him a flat contradiction. Buchanan would groan at the discovery of such ignorance and idolatry, and trembled even for the daughter of his love, who, in spite of his cares, imbibed many of the prejudices of the country, and in particular evinced a strong predilection for "promiscuous dancing," and "wicked minstrelsy."

The Lady never entered into those disputes, though she was often amused with their progress. The Piper, who never sat down in her presence, generally hung behind the door, while, with the help of Moome, he conducted the argument. One evening, when Hugh had listened for three whole hours, with a patience and suavity of manner that might have extorted the approbation of Chesterfield himself, he at length exclaimed,—

"Son of God! Mr Buchanan, you must excuse myself, but I think you might believe what we say;—no Papists are we, being turned from that way long ago, by those who had a good right to know what was best for us; though it is a very good religion, after all, to those who think so. You are proud enough, and great right you *had*,—of your own grandfathers, who fought for their religion;—for which

I think the better of them and of you;—why, then, not let alone the poor Catholics;—and again, as to the Man of Sin, God help us, we have all our sins, more or less, as it may happen: and for the Pope himself, you cannot deny but that he is a gentleman and a Christian;—and, by your leave, what is more than that, a stranger, who never did us harm, so far as I know. So I hope and believe we will have done of it."

Nothing could have been more provoking to the wriggling lubricity of Buchanan's controversial spirit, than the through-going understanding of the Piper, whose whole moral code was comprised in the short maxim, "Do as you would be done by;" and who firmly insisted on the Catholics having the benefit of the very letter of that wide statute. Buchanan was violently recapitulating all his arguments, at a loss whether to pity the Piper's want of understanding or of logic, when a truce was again craved.

"Mary, yes!" cried Moome, "have done of it;—for, as our *ould* minister—God give his soul its peace!—was wont to say,"——

"O woman! woman!" interrupted Buchanan, "purgatory, purgatory;—prayers for the dead—God give his soul its peace!—poor blind

idolaters!—I could not have peace in my conscience, if I did not lift up my feeble testimony against such abominations."

"God's grace and mercy, now," cried Hugh, in a louder tone than he had yet used, "sure it was herself had no thought of offending you or yours, Mr Buchanan,—it would ill become her.—Well;—pardon myself for getting so hot upon it;—Son of God!—send us all to meet in heaven at last, Papist and Protestant."

Buchanan's eyes gleamed with holy zeal, while he said, "Impossible!"—In similar circumstances, his father had often declared, "That heaven would be no heaven to him, were such men in it."—So he regarded himself as tolerant even to weakness.

These worthies differed as much in politics as in religion. The Piper, if any thing, was a Jacobite: the misfortunes of the House of Stuart, the sufferings of many gentlemen who had devoted themselves to its fortunes with that generous enthusiasm which is respectable even in error; and, above all, the cold-blooded cruelties which followed the field of Culloden, interested in the deepest manner the feelings of Hugh. Yet he had a strong *instinct* of loyalty, a natural veneration for all chiefs; and as these vassal affections had

no chosen object by which they might be engrossed, they readily embraced the nearest. Buchanan, on the contrary, detested the whole line of the Stuarts;—never honoured his legitimate Prince with any other epithet than "The *occupant* on the throne;" and made conscience of denying any sovereign who had not sworn the *covenants*,—who was not "the nursing-father of the Scotish church;" and above all, who "wore the sword in vain;"—that is, did not use it to produce universal conformity to the creed of Calvin.

The Lady had another annual visitor, of a loftier and more uncommon character. From early infancy, Norman had heard of "HECTOR THE HUNTER," at first with childish wonder, and superstitious dread, and still with a mixed feeling of awe and curiosity. He could scarcely indeed be called a visitor, who was never seen by the Lady or any of her family. A deer left on the threshold, was all that announced the visit of the hunter. This had been the tribute paid by his ancestors to the Chief for the lands they possessed; these lands had long been forfeited by rebellion, but the annual deer was still paid to the last descendant of Macalbin. This mysterious being lived in a solitary *Arrie* on the north

side of Bennevis, many miles distant from any human habitation; and in that inaccessible region of tempests and snows, his reign was undisturbed even by the adventurous foot of the hunter. He followed the chase, and kept some goats, for his sole subsistence; and had been known to inhabit the same spot from the memorable period of 1745. The reason assigned for this uncommon life, and the vow he was reported to have made, never to speak to any human creature, was more calculated to inflame, than to allay the curiosity of Norman. It was said and believed, that he was beloved by a female fairy, or spirit, for whose sake he had renounced the world, and who had bound him by that vow never to discover their intimacy. When questioned on his history, Moome would sigh; the Piper would shake his head, and pray for peace to his soul; and Norman did not presume to interrogate the Lady, who only told him in general terms, that great domestic calamities, falling on a mind of high enthusiasm, and singular ardour in all its affections, had produced the visionary character of "HECTOR THE HUNTER."

Norman had never been so fortunate as to see this mysterious visitant, though he had often watched for that purpose; and as this

year was perhaps the last he might be in the country, he resolved to be doubly vigilant in noticing his approach to Eleenalin.

In the meanwhile, Flora grew up under the care of the Lady. The romp of fourteen, who used to disturb the meditations of the sage commentator with mirth and laughter, or to derange his manuscripts through the love of order, or of mischief, was changed to a lovely, gentle, and companionable girl of seventeen, who sat by Buchanan's fire-place, while he pursued his studies, as quietly as any piece of furniture. As soon as Buchanan had made this discovery, he became impatient for her return to Ballyruag; and the society of Eleenalin was deprived of one of its principal attractions, in wanting the charm of female youth, and loveliness, and innocent gaiety. Universal regret was felt at parting with Flora.

"Who will dance to my own pipe on an evening?" said Hugh, as he led Moome home from the boat which conveyed Flora from Eleenalin.—"And who will read the scripture to myself on a Sunday," said Moome, "since that darling creature is gone.—For my own part, now, Hugh piper, I think her father might have let her remain, with all his great

learning;—and to be sure I have, and well I may, a great respect for learned men. Many of our clan were learned in their day, though that got out of repute since; there have been bishops of the Isles of the Macalbin family,—so I have a great right to prize learning.—But I tell you now, Hugh piper,"—added she, halting, and placing her hand on his arm; "I tell you now, that Flora Buchanan, and none but Flora Buchanan, shall get my big silver broach, and my amber beads, die when I will. Were Norman a girl indeed,—but his shall be my plaid, to make him a hunting-jacket to wear for my sake,—my garnet broach, a gift from the Lady the day I got Donald, my darling foster-child—and what is more, the *claymore* of *Alister-more*, my brave grandfather, who was *gillie-more* to the then Macalbin.—Piper, you think much of your own strength and your *liveliness*, because you can launch the skiff; but Alister-more could have thrown such a *currach* across his shoulders, and carried it from one loch to another like a nut-shell.—And no wonder—you know his size yourself—nine feet six inches,—still cut on the *gillie-more's* oak, as it is called, where he was measured."

Hugh had no wish to dispute, or even to

disbelieve the strength and prowess of his clansmen, though Norman had once insinuated that the gigantic size of the *gillie-more* had increased with the growth of the tree. But he was silent, and Moome went on to dictate her will, and to appoint him sole executor. "Do you mark my words now, Hugh Piper, and remember them," said she, sighing deeply; "we ought to have all these matters settled, for we know not the day nor the hour, when we shall go hence, and be no more."

CHAP. XIII.

> "O life! how pleasant is thy morning!
> Young Fancy's rays the hills adorning,
> Cold-pausing caution's lessons scorning,
> We frisk away,
> Like school-boys at the expected warning
> To joy and play."
>
> BURNS.

NORMAN had now completed his nineteenth year, and his conversation often turned to that world in which his imagination had long been wandering; and as often would Hugh remark,—"that it was a shame for himself to have lived so long without getting one *sketch* of the world, and regret that his countrymen should suffer so much from the French, without himself having one spell at them."—Hugh generally kept his eye fixed on the Lady when he delivered these sentences, and though she gave no direct reply, she believed that his fidelity and affection might supply the want

of experience, and that Norman, on his outset in life, could have no better attendant.

The hopes of the ideal soldier were now, as he imagined, about to be realized. The Lady had written in his behalf to a gentleman, through whom she hoped to procure him a commission; and with this important letter Hugh was, on the following day, to travel ten miles to the post-office.—"And Norman will take his fowling-piece," said the Lady,—"and cross the hill with you,—I long to see Flora. If her father can spare her to us, her society will cheer these long evenings."—Norman was very much of the same opinion, and it was agreed that they should rise very early next day.

The first object that struck the eye of Moome next morning, was Hugh digging in the potatoe field.—"Hugh Piper up so early, and digging!" exclaimed Moome; "this will be a day of good luck."—The omens of this morning were very important, and luckily they were favourable. Moome had stept to the door of her hut, to draw the presage of the day from whatever first met her eye. It is the custom of every Highlander in her sphere of life. The very morning Sir Norman Macalbin died, she had seen a favourite cow stretched dead on the green plat before her

door, choked with a potatoe; and the day the clan was warned, she had seen a surly strange dog chase her favourite white hen.

Hugh was only waiting for Norman, who at the same moment advanced, equipped in the garb of his native mountains. Moome gazed, with the honest exultation of artless affection, on the graceful figure, and blooming countenance, of her youthful friend, and vowed "there never was a handsomer fellow of his clan, and never would be;"—for Moome, who divided all mankind into tribes, had long considered him as a Macalbin. Hugh flung his *slip-on* around him; (for the Highlanders of the Isles and West Highlands wear their upper garments exactly in the good easy way of their brethren and sisters in Ireland, the sleeves dangling over their back); and, accompanied by Moome, they set forward. Norman, however, recollected that he had no book for Flora, in case she was not permitted to visit Eleenalin, and he ran back. Moome was certain, from this commencement, that the journey would be unpropitious; "For she never knew good come of any thing when people turned back;" and she loved Flora too dearly not to feel chagrined at not seeing her.

But for once Moome's prescience failed. Flora was permitted to visit Eleenalin, and her sparkling eyes spoke her joy.—"I shall be so happy to see the Lady, and to make Moome's caps, and to learn Hugh's new tune, and to nurse the pet lamb!" cried the delighted girl;—"Norman, I'll not make you wait two minutes;" and she flew to prepare for her visit. And in that two minutes, Buchanan would read the fifty pages he had composed since he had last seen Norman. Buchanan's great work was now brought down to the puritanical age of Cromwell. It commenced with the Queen of Sheba, and briefly *touched* on every monarch of Babylon, Egypt, and Assyria, during many centuries. It was divided into three grand parts;—"The prophecies as connected with ancient times, the prophecies as connected with modern times, and the prophecies as presently fulfilling, or as about to be fulfilled."——"I mean just to touch upon the reign of Queen Anne, the Tory ministry, and Protestant succession; for the life of one man is not adequate to the task I have undertaken. And our own age, Norman, demands attention. From the age of the Babylonish captivity, even to that of the glorious Reformation, such a shaking of the nations has not been witness-

ed. We live in an alarming crisis; and you would do well to give heed to the signs of the times." Buchanan then proceeded to illustrate every recent change on the continent of Europe by some dark and fanciful allusion, discernible to no mind but his own; and was pulling down a folio copy of Josephus's history in support of some fact, when Flora luckily re-entered, and Norman, glad of an opportunity to escape, started to his feet.

"I have just been wondering who this Bonaparte may be," added Buchanan, as he dusted the Josephus with his red worsted night-cap.—"I did look for some great man to arise about this time, though I question if this be he."——"You will perhaps be able to say by the time I bring home Flora," cried Norman.—"Then you may keep her three weeks at least;—these matters, my young friend,"——

"Indeed, father," interrupted Flora, "in a matter of that importance, you ought to give yourself time for reflection. You recollect your late mistaken hypothesis about Tippoo."

Buchanan reddened, and exclaimed,—"My hypothesis,—hypothesis, girl; and what know you of an hypothesis?—talk of matters you comprehend;—you explain my hypothesis,

that can neither tell what the word signifies, nor whence it is derived !"

"Well, well, four weeks then," cried Flora, with a vivacity that declared she fully comprehended whence the pleasure of residing at E-leenalin was derived. Buchanan, whose anger lasted but a moment, gave his consent, and charged her to write over by the Piper what the Lady thought of the present aspect of affairs.

"I should prefer the hill-road," said Flora to her companion, "were it equally pleasant to you. There is something so springy and animating in the air of the mountains at this season, that I feel new life when inhaling its pure breath. My soul is more free, my spirits more buoyant; my heart leaps with the wild joy I have so often felt in infancy, when we roamed over these hills together. Perhaps there is no period of life so perfectly happy as childhood."—Flora sighed softly, as she cast an inquiring glance on her young companion.

"I trust every period of life will have its peculiar joys for Flora," said Norman, smiling; "that the pleasures of after life will be brightened by the recollection of her infant and youthful years. With what enthusiasm do I

recal those days of careless innocence. They return to my mind, clad in hues far brighter than reality ever gave. In childhood we are happy, and we know not why; we are delighted, and we know not whence our felicity springs;—but the reflection which accompanies our progress in life, gives a new impulse to our feelings; we turn to survey the blissful period of infancy; we trace the purest feelings of human joy to a source of purity, and are delighted to find that our innocence constituted our felicity. This is a retrospection which must soften the most callous heart, and influence the most corrupted; for surely there exists no being so depraved, who, in viewing his early life through this hallowed medium, will not acknowledge that purity is the best ingredient in the cup of felicity. Indeed, Flora, notwithstanding your father's doctrines, I am often induced to believe, that the complacency one feels in recalling those halcyon days, is a strong proof of original goodness of heart. Why should the mind revert with such delight to those pure and happy days, if it did not feel a natural and intimate sympathy with the innocence which made them blest? Why exert the powers of memory to assemble around us every long-fled image of infant virtue? And why, as

we advance in life, does the heart, shrinking from its bustle and ferment, nauseated by its vanities, turn to find a resting-place amid the scenes of its early happiness? Does it not long to return, that it may renovate its powers, recover its original impulse, learn anew the elements of virtue, and assimilate to that innocence which, in every stage of existence, it finds necessary to felicity? Man is indeed weak, the creature of error, the being of habit; but this longing, this looking back, those pensive regrets, or rapturous feelings, with which we recal past scenes, are alike, in my estimation, proofs of original purity, and pledges of future renovation."

The young mountaineers had now reached a hill-top, which commanded a view of Glenalbin, and of the glen in which Buchanan resided.

"This summit," said Flora, "is the usual boundary of my solitary rambles. 'Tis here I give to the winds all the cares contracted in yon lower world;" and she smiled while she pointed to Ballyruag. My spirits become elastic as the mountain-breeze; my heart triumphs over all its petty troubles. I look alternately to Eleenalin and Ballyruag; my heart vibrates between its homes; 'tis a fluctuation so plea-

surable.—O how I pity those who have been bred up in great towns! who never knew the happiness of loving and gazing on a native glen, and a native mountain!"

"Should I," exclaimed Norman, "at any future time, mingle with the world, be seduced by its follies, or corrupted by its vices, and imbibe all the pernicious maxims ascribed to its intercourse,—the sight of these hills and glens, the haunts of my childhood, in days when happiness walked hand in hand with innocence,—the recollection of those whose lives, even more than their precepts, formed my heart to sentiments of virtue and honour,—O how powerful must be their influence!—Thou loved Eleenalin! sweet retreat of peace and innocence! at sight of thee, every vicious impression must vanish;—I would regain the energy of virtue, I would resume my original character, and become, what he ought always to have been, who was the son of Lady Augusta, and the pupil of Buchanan."

"Welcome, a thousand times, darling Flora," cried Moome, saluting her young friend; "much did I fear you would not come;—but Norman has such luck;—go, or return, all things thrive in his hands;"—and she repeated a Gaelic proverb.

"I am come;—happy girl that I am,—for four whole weeks!—Now I shall make the caps Mary left you, and Hugh's shirts, and—"

"O! no hurry of that!" said Moome.—"But see, darling, how the Piper bound up your woodbine, and stuck twigs to support the pinks you planted, and how the roses of your own bush are blowing. I believe my own bees know Flora's flowers to be the sweetest."

"All that is delightful,—but we forget the Lady," said Norman.

Lady Augusta was now become the friend and companion of the young Highlanders. She exerted all the talents she so eminently possessed, for their instruction and amusement; and her conversation became daily more interesting to her auditors. With strong powers of observation, she had viewed life in all its different aspects, and was intimately conversant with man, as he exists in every diversified situation;—from the rude cottage, to the magnificent palace;—from the mountaineers of Scotland, to the polished nobility of France. To Norman, the conversation of the Lady was an exhaustless source of pleasure. It possessed an ascendancy over his feelings he understood only by its effects. The Lady, like a skilful musician, drew from the pliant chords of his

mind what tones she chose. Norman was alternately roused to indignation, or melted to pity; animated with courage, or thrilled with horror; subdued by sorrow, or rapt in enthusiasm, as the magical power of Lady Augusta swept over his imagination.

CHAP. XIV.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
When wealth accumulates and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish and may fade,
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.
*　*　*　*
Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land."

GOLDSMITH.

IN the evening of that day, Lady Augusta rejoiced to see her family assembled round her parlour fire;—their hearts expanding in that endearing confidence peculiar to the warm and friendly region of the domestic hearth. Flora busily plied the "threaded steel," the Lady sat with her knitting, while Norman carelessly touched his violin; for, on the entrance of Moome, he had ceased reading. Moome was employed with her spindle, and in teaching

Flora an old Gaelic *jorram;* and at intervals she stopped, to chide the delay of the Piper.

"Darkness will bring Hugh," said Moome; "nay, for that matter, he minds darkness as little as light;—I wonder he has not met something to give him a fright, when crossing *Craig-na-calliach* under the cloud of night. I warrant he has fallen in with some wedding, or christening, or *interment*, on the other side of the country; or is helping some one with the potatoe-ground,—for Hugh would go six miles for a dog, sooner than one for himself; while a smithy or a mill was known in Glenalbin, Hugh never lay out of one or t'other."

Norman smiled at her wrath, while he said, "The gable of the smithy has fallen down at last. Poor old Ronald! how will he regret the scene of his early happiness, and cheerful toil;—the blaze of Ronald's forge, and the clink of his hammer, which, in a night like this, we were wont to hear,—how much does the heart miss them!"

"There will soon be no stone left to tell where Dunalbin stood," said Flora. But I hope they will still spare us the lovely tuft of trees.—I never come to Eleenalin, but I feel anew the desertion of the hamlet. When running down the glen, eager to reach the island,

I see the once happy Dunalbin,—my gay hopes vanish of a sudden,—'tis a feeling so painful;—I never fail to recollect these sweet lines of Goldsmith:—

> "When many a year elapsed, I turn to view,
> Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
> Remembrance wakes, with all her busy train,
> Swells at my heart, and turns the past to pain."

"All things are well ordered, my children," said Lady Augusta, whose habitual confidence in the goodness of Providence, forbade her to despair of the fortunes of the human race.—"The emigrants have, by this time, found a generous mother. I hope that they have ceased to regret her who spurned them from her bosom, and rejected their embraces. God grant that, at no future period of calamity, she may ever feel the want of their aid.

"I know little," continued Lady Augusta, "of the political interests of kingdoms, but I would gladly think they are not incompatible with the happiness of men. I should be sorry to believe, that in any country there could exist a difference between political prosperity, and individual welfare; relative ascendancy, and solid internal strength. Luxury must be a very fine thing indeed, if the accumulation of wealth

be an object of greater importance to the welfare of states, than a numerous, and, above all, a *happy* population. And that part of the system, from which the sufferings of our friends have sprung, must also be good;—let the Highlands be made grass parks for England. The revenues of great proprietors will be increased; they will undoubtedly realize their rents more easily, as it is easier to collect money from one or two individuals, than from some hundreds of tenants,—a plea many have coolly urged in vindication of their oppressive measures. The cravings of their newly acquired tastes will, for some time, be more readily supplied, till, by indulgence, their fictitious wants become so exorbitant, that no rise of rents can satisfy their increasing avidity. There was formerly an ascertained and permanent relation between the necessities of our proprietors, and the real produce of their estates. They enjoyed that distinguished condition of life, to which birth and property entitled them, and their swarming tenantry procured a frugal livelihood under their protection. But they have imbibed new opinions, and acquired new tastes; and luxury advances, with rapid strides, into a country nature never intended for its reception. Our proprietors happily discovered

how they might obtain a temporary advance of rent; and it cost them little to decree, that the selfish luxury of one family should be maintained by the misery and exile of hundreds. But the increasing value of their bleak possessions, can never keep pace with the progress of luxury; and the punishment that awaits them, will be fully adequate to their offence. They will have drained the life's blood of their country, and will behold it a desert, without increasing either in wealth, or power, or honour.

"But, if the best riches of a state consist in the number of its industrious and useful members, this new system must be perfectly inimical to the true interests of our country;—its sinews must be weakened, its strength undermined;—it will soon resemble a splendid building, whose cumbrous decorations are not proportioned to the solidity of its foundation,—which speedily totters, and falls to ruin.

"I do not pretend," continued Lady Augusta, "to settle the interests of nations. I am neither a politician nor a casuist. But I have seen my native land populous and happy, and I now behold it a desert. From the castle of Dunalbin, I have seen a wide tract of country, gaily diversified with dwellings, where

humble worth, and humble happiness, found shelter. I have seen an hundred blue smokes rise in this desolate glen. Wherever I turned my eyes, images of felicity rose to greet them. I beheld a poor, but contented people, peacefully enjoying the fruits of their labour, and ready to drain their dearest veins in defence of those to whom they owed the blessing of security. This was a prospect in which my heart revelled,—for it is most grateful to witness the universal diffusion of happiness. But I am no *economist:* my mind ever derived more pleasure from contemplating the simple manners, and humble joys of my countrymen, than in beholding the facility with which new modes enable our landholders to pay heavy taxes, or those nicely adjusted plans of rural economy, which are co-extensive with the kingdom. The price of mutton may be somewhat reduced, and a few modern landholders may be indulged in mingling with the motley inhabitants of squares in the capital, or with the promiscuous visitors of fashionable watering-places. They may be initiated into the manners of wealthy England; gratified, for a time, with all the luxurious enjoyments of highly accommodated life; and imagine themselves rich in possessing the trappings prized by a factitious refine-

ment, little known, and less valued, by their rough ancestors. But, admitting these things to be all very innocent and desirable, the mind involuntarily reverts to the price at which they are purchased: we hear the groans, we behold the tears, of exiled multitudes, and turn from the spectacle of modern splendour with horror and detestation. But I cannot help bewailing the degradation of the great, as well as the misery of the humble;—what so humiliating as lordly, needy vanity, contending, in the lists of fashion and expense, with purse-proud vulgarity? The coarse and insolent triumphs of the one, the affected disdain, and ill-disguised repinings of the other;—how miserable this struggle of paltry passions!—how despicable the poverty of spirit indicated by the piebald, beggarly state affected by a Highland family of narrow fortune, when, renouncing every legitimate claim to a real superiority, they hasten to another country, and condescend to vie with overgrown tradesmen, and bloated contractors."

The conversation languished for a few minutes, and was then resumed by Norman.—"The patriotism of our countrymen is much stronger than that of any other class of the British public. What must be a feeble

sentiment amid the bustle of crowded society, is a vehement passion in our insulated glens. But oppression gradually weans the affections of our countrymen from that land, from which it is driving them forth.—One cannot help rejoicing that so many have reached another region, where the woods will afford that clemency and protection which are denied at home. There, I hope, they will long retain those ancient manners, which are so intimately connected with all their characteristic virtues. I trust that they will ever preserve that ardent and unsubdued spirit of national independence, which has in every age been their ennobling distinction,—the language and the garb of Albyn, —fondly cherish the remembrance of their heroic ancestors, and yet teach the wilds of America to echo the songs of Selma."

Lady Augusta smiled at the warmth of her young friend, while she replied,—"It is extremely improbable that the generous wish you have expressed can ever be accomplished. That state of society which originally formed, and afterwards preserved, our national character, can never be realized in the new world. Our countrymen, I fear, will soon forget that 'Fingal has lived, or Ossian sung.'—But that land of the poor man affords an ample field

for their persevering industry. Their activity will be stimulated, by holding in real property what they formerly only possessed by a capricious tenure. They will learn to exult at having arrived at a land of plenty;—the strong operation of individual interest, will rouse them to permanent exertion;—the acquirement of a taste for the comforts of life, will soon produce their enjoyment:—if any baneful effects follow emigration, this country alone can feel them;—

> "If, in some future hour, the foe should land
> His hostile legions on Britannia's strand,
> May she not then the alarum sound in vain,
> Nor miss her banished thousands on the plain."

"The Highlands and Isles have long been a nursery to the British army," continued Lady Augusta.—"Exempted, by our local situation, from the hazards of foreign warfare, or the possibility of foreign domination, we have long poured forth our hardy clans to the aid of our more exposed neighbours. Our brave mountaineers have long been justly esteemed the flower of the British army. Enterprising in danger, of unshaken fidelity, persevering under reverses, prodigal of life, patient of fatigue, of hunger, of cold, and of

every hardship incident to war;—the excellencies of our soldiers begin where those of others terminate.

"Through the representations of interested individuals, government at length seems aware of some bad consequences from the rapid depopulation of the Highlands. An act has been passed to restrain emigration. Our people are condemned to starve at home, or to exhaust, in conveying themselves to a more fortunate soil, the slender savings which might establish them in a mode of life similar to that which they are forced to renounce in this country. The mind revolts at a measure which so cruelly aggravated the sufferings of the Highlanders. A feeble and spurious humanity pretends to alleviate the consequences, while the cause exists, and gains strength. Emigration is restrained, but the oppressions of landholders must be tolerated.

"But it would be as unjust as indecorous to impute to the legislature, what in truth springs from the selfish passions of interested individuals.

"There are some great proprietors, who, with an ostentatious display of generosity, still retain a numerous tenantry. By affording men to the army, their political import-

ance is heightened; and they readily procure patronage, and find resources, for needy relatives and dependants. Thus are these lordlings handed to preferment, purchased by the blood and toil of men whose families are groaning at home under the lash of servile *factors*, striving to force from an ungenerons soil, what may satisfy the increasing demands of a more ungenerous master. If they dare to whisper their discontent;—if every refinement of petty tyranny at length arouses their desperate energies, and they venture to breathe a purpose of abandoning, at some future period, the protection of a man who exacts such services, and holds out such rewards;—cruelly anticipated in their wish, they are stripped at once of their little possessions,—compelled to embrace a mode of life to which their prejudices and habits are alike repugnant; their families are dispersed and abandoned to the various sufferings of an unfeeling world; often refused a hovel to give them shelter on the surface of that country which poverty and an emigrant act forbid them to leave. I now allude to those persons whose interest, or pride, demands a numerous population; and who would, at the same time, enjoy the advantages of increased rents. There are

some individuals of another class, whom (as they happen to possess lands which require different modes of culture) we have lately seen remorselessly driving the people from a farm adapted for a sheep-walk, while those on a grazing farm were furiously persecuted for indicating the slightest wish to accompany their expatriated neighbours. This is no exaggerated statement," continued Lady Augusta; "many instances may be found at this dreary period, which too fully establish the truth of what I assert. Nay, we have lately beheld this species of persecution carried to an extent at which humanity revolts. The despicable vengeance of cruel men, extending its power as far as the fears and helplessness of its victims, strives to dissolve every bond of social affection, and to eradicate every natural sympathy. By a decree, as odious as any papal interdict, we have seen wretched creatures forbidden all intercourse with their nearest and dearest relatives, if these have unfortunately rendered themselves obnoxious to the *laird* by purposed emigration. On some estates, the crime of giving a morsel of food, or a night's shelter, to a father, or a brother, in these circumstances, is expiated by instant forfeiture of the patch of land, from which the

poor family derives subsistence. These hard-hearted men have a complicated interest; by overturning every obstacle, and at whatever expense of suffering, they would reconcile incompatible advantages;—by human sacrifices, they would propitiate Fortune.

"And how cruelly," exclaimed Norman, "are those evils aggravated, by the insulting manner in which many affect to derive them from the characters and habits of Highlanders! How often has my blood boiled to hear my countrymen stigmatized with idleness and laziness,—branded with a roving, unsettled disposition,—a propensity to wander over the face of the globe!—can any reproach be more unmerited? Where is a people more assiduous in labour, when labour produces advantage, or more patient under fatigue and hardship?—But, above all, is there any people more fondly attached to home, than the mountaineers of Scotland?—Do they not cling to the ungrateful bosom of that country which shakes them off with contempt?"

"Highlanders have long been loaded with these imputations," replied Lady Augusta.—"I remember when, as a redress for every grievance, they were told to live on *fish*. They have often been upbraided with neglecting so

valuable a branch of economy; and the fisheries might indeed, through time, become an important means of improving their condition. But, will the ocean spontaneously yield up its treasures to beings, cut off by poverty from all the means of availing themselves of the local advantages which Providence has placed in their power?—No one thinks of accusing the French and Sicilian peasant of laziness, though he is seen wretched in the midst of nature's abundance. The blame is frankly imputed to the genius of the government, and to want of education;—Ireland, that unfortunate country which God has made, and man has marred,—Ireland alone, and the Highlands of Scotland, are the soils of original and indigenous laziness and idleness.—But I forget our patrons of the fisheries,—and they seem to forget, that the proper cultivation of land, by demanding continual attention, is incompatible with the successful prosecution of fishing. Should our poor people give exclusive attention to the fisheries,—for a few months of an employment, at best precarious, they forfeit the hopes of the year, and ensure no adequate provision for their families. I never heard a Highlander complain of personal fatigue or privations; but I have often been

compelled to give my unsolicited pity to the condition of a solitary fishing-party in the western seas,—I mean those engaged in the white fishery. There was something animating and grateful to human self-complacency, even in the severest toils of the hunter. But these solitary fishermen, without plan, and without combination, living from week to week on some desert rock, daily pursuing their dangerous avocation, subsisting on fish, without either bread or vegetables,—liable to be impressed;——indeed, those ingenious men who speculate at their ease for the advantage of their poorer fellow-creatures, must have singularly wise heads, or remarkably cool hearts. However, this resource is only open to those living in the Isles, or on the coast; —the inhabitants of the inland districts may supply their wants in any ingenious manner they can devise."

"There are still," said Flora, "some Highland gentlemen, whose generous conduct exempts them from censure, and even entitles to praise."

"Nay, I do not blame indiscriminately," replied the Lady. "Thank God, there are still left among us many honourable instances of high birth, ennobled by virtue,—many who

have not bowed the knee to the Baal of modern idolatry,—but, in the modest retirement of the hall of their fathers, dignify their exalted station, and redeem the sinking reputation of their country. These noble men derive their happiness from the prosperity of those who flourish under their paternal sway; they delight in dispensing peace, plenty, and comfort, to all within the bounds of their influence. Would that their influence were more extensive!—Such Highland gentlemen are the genuine representatives of the ancient Chieftain. Stripped of his unbounded power, they still retain all the great qualities which made the character of a hereditary Chief so noble and interesting. Their benevolence may even be traced to a more exalted source, as their generous attachments are neither excited by clannish vanity, nor influenced by old habits and necessities. These gentlemen appropriate small farms to industrious families. With them the claim—" My father, and my father's father, lived under you and yours," is more powerful than—" I will give you a pound more of rent." Yet they encourage every practical plan of liberal improvement; they stimulate the industry of their tenants, and they enjoy their success. They reap the sweet fruits of bene-

volence, and feel all the genuine pleasures of the soul. These excellent men would rather be the benefactors of one honest family, than the possessors of all those baubles and trappings with which others bribe the stare of the multitude,—that indifferent, contemptuous stare, which, in the imbecility of their hearts, they call admiration."

After a long pause, Lady Augusta added,—"An imprudent attempt to reconcile the modern style of living, with an indulgent treatment of dependants, has ended in the ruin of several families in this country. Of that number was my father's. His clannish pride could only be surpassed by his clannish generosity; the sacrifice of his family splendour, or of the happiness of his people, was required; he preferred the former, and incurred both."

Another long pause ensued. The Lady seldom mentioned her family, and never without betraying feelings in which the heart of Norman was not slow to sympathize.

The silence was at last interrupted by the blowing of a horn, which announced the Piper, and summoned Norman to the boat. He started up to obey the signal; while Moome commented on the delay of Hugh, the Lady requested Flora to accompany him across the

lake. The moon shone clearly, as Norman slightly touched the oar on which he leaned, and gazed on the lovely western star, which shone alone in the " purple zone of evening." He had not uttered a word, when the rough voice of the Piper dispelled his reverie.

" What will Moome be saying to myself?" inquired Hugh, as he shook the hand of Flora.

" O, all that you fear," said Flora, laughing; " she must be faced, however;" and Hugh seized an oar, which he plied so lustily, that, in a few minutes, they reached Eleenalin.

" Not a word now, Moome," cried Hugh as he entered; " not a word from your lips, or my *news* is gone." What Moome called *news*, was as necessary to her comfort as the tobacco she smoked. An inquiry after *news* is the first question put to every stranger among a people sequestered from the world, and possessed of imaginations of the liveliest order. This inquiry is, however, very different from indelicate and impertinent curiosity about the personal affairs of others. The Highlanders, particularly the inhabitants of Morven, have a saying,—" That the *stranger* lived a year and a day in the hall of Fingal, before his *name* was asked."—A saying which enforces delicacy to strangers.

Moome remained silent, and Hugh began to relate, with characteristic humour, many stories he had just invented for the occasion. At times she laid down her pipe, and regarded him with a scrutinizing glance; but her faith was unlimited; besides, so young a man durst not venture to sport with her credulity. Hugh was ordered to repeat several of his supernatural tales; and Moome seemed peculiarly delighted with one of a flight of birds which appeared like ravens, but were in reality witches, flying off with the lambs of the "great new sheep farmers" in the Isle of Sky, and spreading dismay and ruin wherever they went. This story happened to be in actual circulation at the time, and had obtained universal credit throughout the country.

"Nay, for that matter," said Moome, "Sky was always namely for witches.—I remember, while you were in France, Lady, that the Chief (by your leave) went to Dunvegan, and was storm-staid for six weeks. The Christmas was coming on, and he was so anxious to get home to his own country, that he resolved to try his fortune at sea, happen what would.—Well, they got out Macleod's twelve-oared boat,—for there were few sails in those times, when a gentleman had plenty of people proud

and happy to attend him.—It would not do,—so they next tried the boat with sails on her; and Angus-breachk, who always sailed with Macalbin, and was a very decent commoner, thought of applying to "Shelas the bearded,"* whose grandmother sunk the great Spanish ship at Tobermorey;—she it was who could command wind and the tide.—Well, she gave Angus a thread, and on that thread were three knots. 'Loose the first,' said she, 'as you pass the point;—if the breeze is not strong enough, loose the second;—but, as you value your own life, or the life of Macalbin,—beware of the third.'—Angus accordingly loosened the first as they passed the point, and a gentle breeze

* Such specimens of Highland superstition as are interspersed in these pages are genuine, and of recent date. The people of the three *countries*, as the islands of Mull, Coll, and Tiree, are called, have a belief that the Florida, a ship of the Spanish Armada, was destroyed by the agency of a witch, still held in great reputation for this patriotic exploit. The Spanish Captain is reported to have possessed considerable skill in dark arts himself, but the Highland woman had superior powers. The myrmidons of each assumed the form of cats; six cats belonging to the witch were seen climbing the rigging of the ship.—"I will match her yet," cried the Spaniard. Three auxiliary cats were sent out.—"I am now undone," cried the Spanish Captain; and the ship immediately foundered.—There is a wild and remote tradition of the clan of Maclean, sometimes confounded with the exploit of the witch.

sprung up;—he loosened the second, and it freshened to a gale;—urged by a fatal curiosity, he loosened the third,—and, Lady, such a hurricane arose, that none thought they would ever make land.—To be sure, had Macalbin himself not been in the boat, she had never escaped.—I have known many to apply to that witch for fair winds;—and only last year, a drover going to Uist was tossed about for six weeks, driven to every harbour in the north, and at last obliged to return, and make his peace with her daughter, whom he had offended."

"The gentlemen of Sky are attempting to

A Princess of Spain was urged to marry, and uniformly refused, alleging that, in a dream, she had seen a gentleman with whom she was deeply and hopelessly in love. Her father fitted her out a gallant ship, and this errant damsel sailed round the world in quest of the man of her love. In her voyage she halted at Duart, and of course he was found to be the Chief of Maclean; but unfortunately, he was already married. The beauty of the Princess, however, seduced his affections. He paid daily visits to the ship, which is described as being nearly as splendid as Mr Southey's ship of heaven. This soft intercourse was at length discovered by the Lady of Duart, who, fired with jealousy and revenge, immediately plotted against the life of her husband and her beautiful rival. The catastrophe of the Spanish Princess is very tragical, but, through the fidelity and attachment of his people, Duart was saved.

shoot these black-winged witches," said Hugh. "And as well might they shoot at the flying stars," cried Moome; "there is indeed one way of shooting a witch,—a silver button, or a silver sixpence will do it;—but, should their last lamb go for it, (by your leave), I would not tell them that secret."

"Wonderful power of silver!" cried Norman, smiling at her bitterness; "but I am sure, Moome, you could not be so ill-natured as keep the secret." Moome replied by repeating a long Gaelic rhyme, lately made against "*black-faced sheep, and enterprising sheep-farmers;*" concluding with desiring the landholders to march out their flocks against French troops;—and Hugh went on with his adventures.

"Macpherson of the New Inns," said he, "promised to forward the letter, and requested me to show the marches of Glenalbin to a short, Low-country, or English gentleman, who was along with him, riding over the property;—I had no great mind to go," continued Hugh, "yet one could not refuse a stranger."

"You had little to do, Hugh Piper *mach* Piper," exclaimed Moome, shaking her head angrily; "you had little to do to point out your master's marches to any son of woman.

Och, my heart! and it was myself little thought, the day you were whipped round these marches, that ever the stranger would get footing in Glenalbin. Well do I remember that day,—the very day it was after Drimigha saw Finlay-roy.*—But, perhaps, the *childer* never heard me tell it.——Finlay-roy had been confined to a sick-bed for some years, and was not expected to rise again;—Drimigha,—and a worthy man he was,—was walking out in the twilight about the farm, as was his custom, when, all at once, he saw Finlay-roy. Pale, indeed, and ill he looked;—but (by your leave) to see him at all was astonishing; and the good man said, 'I am glad to see you so well, Finlay.'——'I am very well now,' said he; and they passed each other. But you may guess the heart Drimigha had when he entered his own door, and met the people seeking an old shirt to put on the corpse of Finlay-roy! ——I do well remember that the old Piper was telling me the story, when Hugh, and

* This apparition, *taisch*, or *wraith*, was seen, or imagined, by a very respectable old gentleman in one of the Western Isles, the father of a physician who has attained considerable celebrity in the world. It is the practice of Highlanders, in similar circumstances, to solicit, from some generous neighbour, a shirt of finer texture than those used by themselves.

some other boys, who had been led round the marches, came the way. Alas, alas! for a wide march Macalbin then had, and many a blue smoke rose on his property. Do you not remember now, Hugh, how I gave you a *kaper*, and a *crogan* of milk?—*Och hone, och hone!* to show the stranger these marches,—it is the wound of my heart, never to forget it."

The shock Moome's spirits had sustained, betrayed her into a strength of expression, against which she carefully guarded, when in presence of the Lady. Lady Augusta, however, discovered no extraordinary emotion; but Norman, anxious to spare her feelings, tried to change the conversation.

"But why was the Piper whipped?" cried he; "surely our good Uncle Hugh was guilty of no offence meriting such an odious punishment?"

"It was, till lately," replied Lady Augusta, "the practice of this part of the country, that boys, on attaining a certain age, should be taken round the marches of the gentlemen on whose property they were born, and undergo a fashion of flogging at particular landmarks. Having no inclosures, nor any precise mode of ascertaining boundaries, we had recourse to this rude plan; and it served the purpose.

Hugh will always remember the landmarks at which he was whipped."

"A most *sensible* and impressive way of imprinting the truth," cried Norman, laughing; and Hugh proceeded in his narrative.

"No one will believe me now,—but it is as true as I spell my name Macalbin,—the New Inns is as full of workmen as it can hold,—all come from the Low-country, to fall to the old castle, and have it in order before the shooting season, as I am told." The Piper looked anxiously round, to see the effect of his information. No one spoke;—but Moome dashed the ashes out of her pipe, and rose to retire. The whole party followed her example, each musing in silence on the information of the Piper.

CHAP. XV.

"O'er the still lake the bell of evening toll'd,
And on the moor the shepherd penned his fold,
And on the green hill's side the meteor played,
When, hark! a voice sung sweetly through the shade.
* * * *
She left the shade, nor marked the stranger there;
Her pastoral beauty, and her artless air,
Had breathed a soft enchantment o'er his soul,
In every nerve he felt her blest controul."

ROGERS.

THE preparations at Dunalbin for the reception of the new inhabitants, and even their arrival, were but little attended to in Eleenalin; for some months had passed, and the Lady received no answer to the letter which was to decide the fortunes of Norman. His impatience of inaction, and extreme unwillingness to remain any longer a burden on her generosity, made him earnestly solicit her permission to enrol himself as a volunteer in a fencible regiment then raising in the country. Such a measure had been by no means un-

common among cadets of respectable families in the Highlands, before the amazing increase of the military establishment had made commissions so very plentiful. The Lady put a mild negative on his request, but promised, that if nothing more eligible offered, he should, in the following spring, have her approbation to his favourite project, romantic as it seemed. Norman kissed her hand in rapture. His young and sanguine imagination promised the most unbounded success,—the most enviable distinction. To conceal the transports of his joy, he ran to the lake, promising to procure Flora trout for supper.

The day was so sultry, that he rowed his skiff to a small creek in Kenanowen, and sought shelter in its dark woods. He wandered along an irregular path, which wound up the lower range of the mountains, now untrodden save by some solitary shepherd, and nearly obstructed by tangling thickets of honeysuckle, hawthorn, broom, and eglantine, around which, luxuriant climbing weeds had hung many a blooming wreath. Norman threw himself on a couch of fern, and lingered long under the grateful shade of the slender birch trees which skirted the cliffs; finding amusement and pleasure in gazing on the

bright blue light that quivered through their undulating branches. As the day became more cool, he pursued his ramble. The masses of many-coloured granite, which composed the declivity, starting at his feet, or hanging ruinous over his path, were embossed with mosses of every vivid tint. Every crevice was adorned with rich tufts of the golden cinque-foil, or stately fox-glove,—every ledge ornamented with the juniper, the alpine arbutus, and the aromatic shrubs peculiar to the mountains,—the whole exhibiting a variety and warmth of colouring which has seldom been surpassed, even amongst the rich corn-fields, and green pastures, of a softer landscape. While climbing this steep path, Norman often paused to survey the varying picture;—to feast his eyes on nature's loveliness;—to enjoy the pure elastic gale, which wafted aside the leaves of the arbutus, and discovered its glowing clusters of scarlet, or purple berries,—swept over the copses, and the lake, and brought to his bosom the spirit of freshness and joy. And often did he turn to gaze on the desolate residence of humble worth.

In Glenalbin, now consigned to its original wildness, every trace of cultivation was almost effaced. In vain did the wearied eye wander along the stupendous mountains in search

of some green spot on which it might rest;—in vain did it explore the thick copses which skirted their base, in quest of some smoking cottage to relieve those solemn emotions which the deep repose of nature awakens in the mind; and to refresh the heart with those joyous sensations excited by the view of human bliss, enjoyed amid the simplicity of rustic life.

How deep was the slumber of nature in that once breathing glen!—Every trace of society that now remained, exhibited the gloomy image of desolation. The decayed cottage-wall, the mouldering roof, resting in heaps on that cheerless hearth, where the hare had left her young; —the grass-grown path, and the grey stone of the dead, were all the vestiges of man that could now be seen in Glenalbin;—emblems at once of his power and mutability. These objects in succession claimed the attention of Norman, and awakened many an interesting association connected with his infancy, his youthful years, and that dim, portentous futurity, which his fancy was ever busy in pourtraying with a bold, though extravagant pencil.

"Would that I could read the destiny which awaits me in yon distant world!" he exclaimed, while his eye ran along the aerial mountains that bounded the southern point of the horizon;

—" Would that the hour were come, when, in some corner of yon mighty theatre, I might struggle to realize the independence to which I aspire, and contribute to the happiness of those I love!"

Norman was now filled with a desire to rush into the active scenes of life, which daily became more importunate. A mind singularly ardent in all its conceptions, and sanguine in its hopes, levelled every obstruction in the path to glorious distinction; and the ingenuous simplicity peculiar to unsuspecting youth, promised the rapid accomplishment of every wish his fancy could form. The felicity of those he loved was the object of them all. Never had the social heart of Norman conceived an exclusive plan, but of the dangers he would encounter,—the efforts he would make,—the hardships he would despise, and despising conquer, to evince the warmth of his affection to his friends, and his worthiness to be called the son of Lady Augusta in soul, if not in blood. But all the phantoms which flitted before the mental vision of Norman, stole their splendour from the enthusiasm for military glory with which his soul was imbued. A brilliant imagination, a romantic education, a lonely residence in the wilds of a picturesque region, thinly inhabited by a mar-

tial people, were circumstances well calculated to inspire and foster the love of fame in the bosom of youth; and already were the brows of the embryo hero entwined with the laurels of glory. Often, too, would the ingenuous diffidence of his nature shrink back from the splendid creations of his fancy; his young cheek would glow with the blush of shame, while he whispered to himself,—"Surely I am very vain; what right have I to expect that HE should notice me?"

There is no young visionary who does not propose to himself some object of hopeless, though anxious imitation;—some Brutus or Cato,—some Nelson or Moore, who shall be the guiding star of his soul; and Norman already had his hero, whose notice was distinction. He had read that narrative in which the most amiable of fathers records the exploits of the most gallant of sons. How exquisitely are the honest triumphs of the parent chastened by the modesty of the man! Norman devoutly kissed that book, pressed it to his throbbing heart, and bedewed it with his tears. "This, this is my hero," he exclaimed, "in whose footsteps I will tread, at however humble a distance!"

But our young hero, who retained somewhat of the sobriety of common sense, amid all his

enchanting reveries, and chimeras of war and glory,—now recollected the trout, and his promise to Flora, and hastened to regain his skiff.

Darting through every tangling thicket, and overleaping every rocky barrier with the wildness of exuberant spirits, he had arrived at the banks of an alpine stream fringed with natural wood, smiling with the freshest verdure, and overhung with many a fantastic rock, and airy summit, when his ear caught the soft murmurs of a female voice. With a feeling of surprise he stooped down to listen, and stretching himself on an overhanging cliff, beheld a female seated many feet beneath him, in a compartment of the crag, which was canopied by a waving mountain-ash. With all the lisping endearments of baby language, he heard her address an unseen companion, whom he at first fancied a child, but soon discovered to be a tamed bird, which she was teaching to sing. There was so much of the innocence, simplicity, and warmth of early youth, discovered in her fondling expressions, and so much pretty childishness in the idea of carrying a bird into the woods, that Norman, half charmed and half amused, continued to observe this "very young lady," as he fancied her, till she repeated the musical lesson of her winged pupil, in a voice that thrilled every nerve of

his frame, though it extorted no sign of admiration from the favourite. Norman had a lively sensibility to the charms of harmony, and he heard for the first time that sweet and tender ballad,

"Drummossie moor, Drummossie day."

"What melting tones! what soul-breathing expression!" thought Norman. His soul hung on the lips of the syren. The goldfinch seemed to have no *sentiment.* Though dumb to the pathetic ballad, it gaily tried to imitate its young mistress, as she carolled a blithe strathspéy. Enraptured with its performance, she rose to load the little pet with caresses, and discovered a face and form which far exceeded the fairest painting of Norman's fancy. Light, graceful, blooming, bewitching,—young indeed, but not the child he had imagined;—the fire of her eye, the vivacity and play of her exquisite features, proclaimed all the newly-awakened and fine sensibilities of life's most enchanting era.—"Surely I dream!" thought Norman; and the vivacity of his emotions had nearly betrayed his situation.

The young stranger opened the gilded prison of the favourite, which was suspended from a branch of the tree.——"Come kiss

me, my lovely bird; kiss me, my sweet play-mate."—She held out her hand, to which it familiarly hopped. She fondly pressed its little bill to her dewy lip: it flew from side to side, it perched on her shoulder, it nestled in her hair, it wantoned in the sweets of freedom.——"Happy little bird!" thought the concealed spectator.——"We shall return home," said the young stranger, stretching out her arm to convey it to the cage. It flitted from her head, and perched among the foliage of the tree which waved above her. She stretched out her arms, but the little traitor eluded her grasp.——"Oh! can you leave me?" she exclaimed, half fearful, and half fond. Norman was flying to catch it.——"Return, return, my lovely bird," cried she, in a caressing voice, but it flew to a higher branch. She held up the cage with tears in her eyes; she sung its favourite air; she tried a thousand expedients, while the ungrateful pet, heedless of her blandishments, looked on askance, or flitted from bough to bough, quivering his wings with the instinctive joy of new found liberty. A loud scream announced a bolder flight. The bird had flown to the summit of the cliff on which Norman leaned.——"Oh, I have lost him! lost him for ever!"—But

the words died on her lips, when her eager eye, pursuing the favourite, first beheld Norman.

"I will find your bird, lady," cried Norman,—"you shall not lose him;"—and he bounded after the fugitive, which, gathering new courage from every flight, often made long excursions, and left his pursuer far behind.

Norman was no sooner out of sight than the young stranger felt her cheeks tingle with the blush of shame.——"What a fool I must appear!" thought she;—"A stranger, a young man,—how came he hither? he may long have seen—heard me! Oh, I shall expire of confusion. Cruel little bird, thus to betray me. But I will run home, and never, never see him more." Hesitating between affection for her little favourite, and the shame of again meeting the stranger, the young lady began to climb the cliff, secretly resolving to hasten home, and to leave the bird to his fate. Sho was midway up the cliff, when the appearance of Norman, darting across a yawning chasm, which, by the sudden acclivity of the mountain, seemed, from the spot where she stood, suspended in air, arrested her steps. This object awakened a higher interest. Her shame, her regret, were

forgotten, and her whole soul absorbed by the imminent danger of the young stranger. ——"Oh God, he will be killed!" cried she wildly.—"Oh Sir, stop; let the bird go; I love him not, I want him not!"

But Norman heedlessly flew from cliff to cliff, while the bird, following the course of the stream, crossed and recrossed, and seemed to mock his activity. In swinging himself from the branch of a tree to reach an opposite rock, his foot slipped, and a wild shriek from the young stranger expressed her terror. He instantly regained his hold; but the young lady, following the strong impulse of her fears, sprung forward, and, forgetting that she stood midway up the cliff, leapt into the channel of the stream. Norman flew to her assistance, and in a moment she was seated on the opposite bank. The stream was fortunately almost dried up, by the long heats of summer; but, in falling, she had wounded her head among the loose rocks which the winter torrents had torn from the narrow banks, and deposited in the channel. Blood slowly trickled from her temple;—her face became deadly pale;—she struggled with her feelings of pain and alarm, till, incapable of farther effort, she sunk into insensibility. Norman

had never before seen even a temporary suspension of life, and he was distracted by the most dreadful apprehensions.——"She will die in my arms!" exclaimed he—"die without assistance;—wretch that I am, what will become of me!"—and his hand shook with more than feminine tremor, while he tried to stop the effusion of blood, and tore his handkerchief into bandages. The pain of the wound, and the powerful feeling of her situation, soon recalled the young stranger to recollection. She opened her languid eyes. —"You live!" cried Norman, involuntarily drawing her closer to his breast, for his heart claimed kindred with the fair unknown being, whose solicitude for his safety had produced an accident so alarming. The young stranger, as if alarmed at her situation, blushed deeply, while she tried to rise, and to thank him for his cares. As if unable to stand, she clung for support to a spreading hazel-tree, which grew beside her while Norman, more delicate than gallant, stood back, nor presumed to offer his farther assistance. Yet he looked as if his soul would have flown to her aid, while he eagerly scanned every motion of her eyes, and thought how he might offer his services with least offence to her delicacy. What were

his feelings, to see that, though she smiled, those fine eyes were swimming in tears! She looked to her foot,—attempted to walk,—it bent under her. It had been sprained in her fall. Overcome by the feelings of her situation, she burst into tears. Norman sprung forward, and while he earnestly intreated her to command his services, bitterly accused the rashness and impetuosity which had occasioned her distress.

"Oh! no; I alone am to blame," cried she; "often have I been warned against rambling so far among these cliffs." Norman saw her anguish of mind with the most lively concern;—the foot, too,—that small and delicate foot, so cruelly hurt. A thousand plans rushed through his mind. He offered to run to the castle, of which she was an inhabitant, but it was two miles distant; evening was fast closing in: to leave her alone in that solitary dell,—sick and alone!—It was impossible! and this impossibility emboldened him to make the offer which for some time had hung on his lips;—"to assist her to his skiff, and convey her to Eleenalin. Eleenalin was near, the castle distant, and the path rugged and dangerous; darkness was fast coming on; Lady Augusta was the most benevolent of beings; his skiff

was anchored in the creek below; and information of her safety might be sent to Dunalbin, even before she could be conveyed thither." The eyes of the young lady brightened at this proposition, for she shuddered at being left alone, and in darkness, in that solitary spot, and felt that she was unable to walk to Dunalbin.

"I fear that I must be an intruder on the hospitality of that good lady, for some hours at least," said she; "but I am no stranger to her virtues;—I will gladly accompany you to Eleenalin."

But a new difficulty occurred. Norman had for years been accustomed to carry Flora over swamps, through streams, and *peat-bogs*, on his shoulder, in his arms, and in all manner of ways. From the nature of the country, this is indeed a piece of troublesome gallantry Highlanders must often pay to their fair companions; but this was a stranger,—young, delicate, apprehensive, and unable to walk. Whatever were the terms of the agreement, it was silently concluded; and, on reaching the pebbly shallow where the skiff was moored, the fair stranger flattered herself that she had almost walked; while Norman, from the tumultuous throbbing of his heart, now first awakened to

the delicious thrillings of a powerful passion, felt that he had clasped her in his arms, when supporting her feeble steps; that her breath had blown upon him, when bending her head to avoid the boughs that over-shadowed the path, and had inspired him with a new principle of life. Norman seated his fair charge on a rock, and collecting a quantity of dried fern, (which Hugh had luckily left, to be burnt for some of Moome's manufactures), threw it into the skiff, and, with some branches of birch and hazel, formed a sylvan couch for her accommodation. He assisted her (now greatly exhausted with the pain she suffered) into the skiff, and pushed off from the shore. To his timid inquiry she replied, that she felt greatly relieved by the ease of her recumbent posture; and now expressed some reluctance to intrude on the solitude of Lady Augusta Macalbin.

"Though I never durst intrude on the retirement of that lady," said she, "she has often been the subject of my thoughts, since I have heard, though but imperfectly, her story. Often have I cast a longing eye at the little paradise she inhabits. There is something in her story, her situation, and her way of life, peculiarly interesting to one's feelings; but I presume you know her better than I do!"

"*I do know her*," said Norman; and they relapsed into silence.

The last flush of day tinted the lovely form that reclined at the feet of Norman; every cliff caught the rosy glow. The lingering sunbeams quivered on the lake, which gently undulated to the sweep of his oar.——"How lovely, how still!" thought Norman, "this is the witching hour!"—and his truant glance, which, for a moment, had wandered round the enchanting scenery, returned to an object a thousand times more interesting to his sensibility. "Were she but well," thought he, "how exquisitely would her presence heighten every charm of nature!" If love begins with the first sigh, this was its era in the bosom of Norman. The young stranger was playing with the branches that waved around her, as if eager to find occupation. He sighed deeply, and sunk into a reverie, from which he was recalled by the pipe of Hugh. Fortunately, the melody was in unison with the feelings of the moment. Low-breathed, plaintive, and almost desponding, it gently harmonized with the stillness of the hour, and seemed to lull the sweet repose of nature. Norman sighed again;—that soft strain seemed the living language of his new and undefinable feelings. But the

modern Timotheus suddenly changed the measure to a bold pibroch, which had often roused the spirit of the young ideal soldier. Even now it struck a sympathetic chord in his bosom; his physiognomy took a more energetic character; he pulled the oar with fresh vigour. His young companion was a painter, and somewhat of a physiognomist. "The contour of an Alcibiades!" thought she. The glance of the young disciple of the arts was timid and momentary; yet Norman caught it, and she averted her eyes with more confusion than an artist usually discovers.

"These sounds must be harsh and uncouth to your ears," said Norman, who now wished the Piper were less noisy in his greetings; "but they thrill the heart of a Highlander, and the Piper is not aware of your presence."

"I am glad that it is so, since it procures me an unexpected pleasure. I am no Highlander, but I love every thing Highland;—there is a warmth and frankness about the people of this northern region, that no kind spirit can resist."

"I am happy you find it so," replied Norman; "you give me a new motive to love my country;" and at that instant the Piper bawled in Gaelic, "What luck?—how many dozens?"

"Hush!" cried Norman in the same language; "I have had great luck,—caught a Mermaid;"—and he threw out a rope.

"Caught a Mermaid!" echoed the Piper; "God's grace and mercy! take care what you are about;—these are dangerous neighbours. I have heard of them in the North, with a comb and a looking-glass. O, I know you jest with me."——"Nay," said Norman softly, "look, when you have fastened the boat."——"They sing, to warn seamen of their approaching fate;" added Hugh; "you have heard our own Moome tell of one who allured a young man into the sea, and drowned him at some part on Loch Etive, which the people of Lorn call the 'basking-place of the sea maiden.'"

The boat was now touching the land, the fair stranger raised her head among the branches.——"Son of God!" exclaimed the Piper; but his terror was only of momentary duration; and, twisting up his features to more than their usual archness, he added,—"I see it is so;—well, God keep you; these are ticklish fishes;—for my own part, a dozen of trout, or even flounders, would have pleased me as well; but the skin may be good for something."—Norman directed him to an-

nounce their arrival to the Lady, and to pre-pare her for the reception of her guest.

He was slowly advancing with his fair charge, when the inhabitants of Eleenalin met their view. A weather-worn, but truly Caledonian face; small twinkling merry eyes; a mouth puckered into a thousand wrinkles by habitual risibility; a complexion darkened by the sun of many a summer; masses of hair, hesitating between dingy and grey, and shading a neck of the same ambiguous hue; a small Highland bonnet, a short coat, and a philabeg of tartan, scarlet hose, a pair of genuine brogues, and an exhausted bag-pipe hung over the left shoulder, announced the great hereditary piper.

At his right hand stood Moome, her distaff stuck in her bosom, the spindle dangling by her side. A low, spare figure, kept in perpetual neatness; the snowy cap, the many-chequered *tunag*, the ample broach, and large amber beads; but, above all, the silver locks, and the maternal smile, which triumphed over the ravages of time and misfortune, made age appear amiable, as well as interesting, in the venerable nurse of Macalbin.

Next, leaning on the light form of Flora,

appeared the Lady, of that height and majesty of figure which the imagination loves to assign to the last descendant of a noble race. The traces which age had furrowed on the countenance of Lady Augusta, while they stole from its beauty, added to its dignity and expression. Her large-orbed dark eye still beamed with undiminished brilliancy,—still emanated the grandeur of a lofty spirit, and sent its keen glance to the soul.

A shade of uneasiness passed across the mind of Lady Augusta, as she approached the unexpected visitor, who, leaning on the arm of Norman, advanced with pain and difficulty. He briefly told the nature of the accident, and introduced the fair stranger. The countenance of the Lady had recovered its wonted serene benevolence, animated by the spirit of active humanity. She welcomed the stranger, in language that, though not modish, was kind, polished, and encouraging; and hastened to afford her every requisite assistance.

With that propensity to *quizzing* which infects every rank, the Piper repeated to Moome the story of the Mermaid. The flowing white robes of the stranger, her long dark tresses waving in the breeze, her uncommon

beauty, and the uncertain light of the hour; but, above all, a strong admiration of the marvellous, confirmed the illusion, and she stood absorbed in wonder and speculation. But the approach of Norman, to solicit her attentions to an inhabitant of the castle of her chief, gave a new tone to her feelings. Her natural prejudices and resentments, though violent and decided, were tempered by kindness and courtesy; and their expression was restrained by a certain humble dignity, and proud sense of what every Macalbin owes to himself and to a stranger.

" From the castle !" said Hugh, with a very expressive look.——" From Dunalbin !" cried Moome; " But she is a stranger—ill and a stranger."——" Mary, yes !" exclaimed Hugh, accusing his own harshness—" she is a stranger, and I forgot it ;—so go to her, Moome, you may do her good."

Moome went to the lady, and Norman, left alone with the Piper, coud not deny himself the pleasure of bewailing the beautiful little foot.

" Ay,—it is not good for your low-country ladies to be jumping about the rocks like our girls, seeing they are not used to it," said the Piper dryly.—Norman was almost offended.—

However, I am sorry for her foot, too; and if Moome manage it as she did mine, when I put it out at the peat-bog,—rolling it up in lard and black wool"——

"Lard and black wool, and your foot!" cried the impatient Norman; "On my word, you talk like a fool. I tell you, you never in your life saw such a foot."

"Perhaps not," replied Hugh, with perfect good humour; "But my own poor foot must live for all that. It is a very useful foot to me;"—and he held it up.——"And to me," said Norman, laughing;—"and just now I must employ it."

The Piper changed colour;—"I cannot go," said he earnestly.—"To Dunalbin,—it is impossible."——"Nay, dear Hugh, I will do no violence to your feelings,—I shall go myself."

"That must not be," cried Hugh, while a solitary tear fell on his cheek; "it is my Lady's wish. Ill would it become me to say nay to the blood of Macalbin. Yet I hoped HE would in mercy have taken me to HIMSELF long and long ere I could see a stranger's smoke rise from the walls of Dunalbin."—Norman, greatly distressed by the Piper's sorrow, persisted in going himself; but Hugh was now resolute. His feelings, his wishes,

all were annihilated by the command of Lady Augusta, for Hugh, in common with all his clan, felt that—

> "Born for her use, he lived but to obey her."

He waited to receive the orders of his lady, making those generous efforts to suppress his feelings, which, with their existence, concurred to do him honour.

By the applications of Moome, and the soothing attentions of the Lady and Flora, the young stranger was soon relieved from the anguish of the sprain. She wrote to inform her family of the cause of her absence; and the Lady also sent a polite note, expressing her satisfaction at being honoured with the company of Mrs Montague, (for so was the stranger called), and inviting her friends to Eleenalin. With these notes, addressed to "Miles Montague, Esq." Hugh departed for the castle.

CHAP. XVI.

"He took me up, a tender little flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipped; and, with a careful loving hand
Transplanted me into his own fair garden,
Where the sun always shines."

OTWAY.

THE Piper, at his return, was met on the beach by Norman, anxious, yet reluctant to interrogate him on all he had seen and heard; for now every thing connected with the castle interested his curiosity.

"I hope I did not linger," said Hugh mournfully, while he fastened his boat to the stump of a willow that hung over the lake.—"You have been very expeditious. I hope the friends of the young lady are not greatly alarmed. I expected some of them to return with you."——"*He* is afraid of the water, but I am to go for him to-morrow."

"Who?"——"The *carle* that lives in Mac-

albin's castle !—I cannot recollect your low country names," replied Hugh peevishly.

" Mr Montague, perhaps."——" Very like."

" You have seen him, then ?"——" I have seen *him* in Macalbin's hall, whom, had I met on a moor, I would have thought fitter for Macalbin's kitchen. Your Low-country people do well to tell us what they are; for, to look at some of them, one would as soon suspect myself for a gentleman." Norman smiled, and Moome now joined them. " I hope I did not linger !"—repeated Hugh earnestly.

" That you did not;—little reason you had, —though I know your way,—still talking with every one you meet;—I knew no grass would grow at your heels that road." The presence of Norman restrained her numerous queries, for she judged of his feelings by her own, and feared to touch on a topic so delicate as Dunalbin possessed by the stranger.

As they approached the cottage, Hugh, with somewhat of his usual archness, questioned Moome about the " beautiful foot," while his sly glance pointed the inquiry to Norman.

" Mary, yes ! and beautiful it is," cried Moome; " the little tripping foot of a fairy. And such a darling creature ; I never thought any thing so like a *countrywoman* could come

from the Lowlands; and if she be ordained for *him*, how will he get past her!"

"Sister of my mother, you too bewitched by the stranger!" said the Piper in Gaelic, and in a voice of reproach; "no, the stem is from another hill that will give a scion to CLAN-ALBIN!" Hugh seldom assumed so high a tone; and, smiling and shaking his head, he added, "She is a hawk of a bad nest!" Whether Norman had more faith in Unah's predictions, or whether they best agreed with his own fancy, cannot be determined; but certain it is, that he squired her home, listening implicitly to her pious exhortations against "*reflecting on what was ordained for us by* HIM *who best knew the wants of his children.*"

The young stranger was, by this time, almost domesticated in Eleenalin. "I know you must all consider me a fool," said she; "but I am content, even at this expense, to gain an introduction to Eleenalin. You cannot, in common justice, Lady, deny me an opportunity of redeeming my character, and proving, if possible, that I am not quite a fool. You cannot, I hope, guess how dearly she may love a little bird, who is left with no other living thing to love;" —and 'the eyes of a thousand meanings,' as

Moome long afterwards called them, glistened with tears.

The Lady, with frank politeness, acknowledged the obliging request of her insinuating guest. It was long since she had seen any thing resembling the elegant young creature who now solicited her friendship. This ingratiating stranger gave back the brightest days of her life. Though she appeared to have the highest grace of polished society, she also retained something of the arch simplicity of an original character. The buoyant spirits, and warm affections of youth, were continually bursting through the restraints imposed by dawning womanhood; and the delicacy which guided this struggle, gave to her manners a fascination alike unconscious and undesigned. With the Lady and Flora, she already seemed anxious to gain all the caressing privileges of domestic intimacy; but as soon as Norman joined the party, her manner involuntarily rose to the winning reserve of cultivated woman; and no one could have guessed that she had, within the last four years, either sung to a bird, or frolicked with a kitten.

Norman joined the female party at supper. He paid his congratulations to the fair stranger in a hurried manner, and had not trusted his

eyes with gazing on her who filled all his thoughts, when he heard the Lady address "Mrs Montague!" Involuntarily he started, his heart beat rapidly, and he turned his keen eye on the young stranger, whose heightened colour reproved his earnest gaze.

"A wife!" thought Norman, "perhaps of the person Hugh described, who would not venture to Eleenalin. O, had I such a claim on *any one*, how happy, how blest, to venture life itself!"—But he checked the flow of his feelings, and excused their warmth, by reflecting, "That she was so very, very young; so very lovely—and to be a wife!—it was all so strange!"

The moment that the ladies retired, he hastened to the Piper, with an increased opinion of his discernment of character, and more disposed than was consistent with his usual candour, to hear the inhabitant of Dunalbin represented as vulgar, awkward, and unlike a gentleman. Hugh gave a very lively description of the stranger, which, if consistent with truth, did no great honour to the taste and judgment of his young and lovely wife.—— "Can she be united to such a person?" cried Norman.

"United!—God bless you, darling," cried

Moome, " the poor child is a wife, and, what is more, a widow."

" A widow !" exclaimed Norman, while his eyes sparkled; and he put fifty questions in a breath.

" A widow !" re-echoed the Piper, laughing at his warmth; " the small foot for ever!" Norman also laughed at his vivacity and penetration, while Moome replied,——" A small foot it is, sure enough; and I hope soon to see it following your own pipe;—I must say I never saw a finer head of dark hair on a woman."

" I have seen a finer, and so have you too," said Hugh reproachfully. Moome, her face colouring with insulted affection, indignantly answered,——" Sure, Hugh Piper, you will not dare to say, or think, I ever *evened* a stranger to the daughters of Macalbin?"

" Mary, no! God forbid!—I am sure you could not," said Hugh, almost weeping;—and Norman, who foresaw a very sentimental scene, left the hut, and retired to his attic chamber, treading very softly, lest he should disturb the repose of his lovely neighbour.

The various events of the day had chased sleep from his pillow; and at an early hour he arose, determined to find the fugitive bird. It

had returned to its splendid prison in search of food, unable to preserve the freedom it prized. After tracing every scene of the past evening, seating himself in the compartment of the rock where he had seen the lovely stranger, whistling over the strathspey she had sung, and leaping from the cliff from which she had fallen, to learn the shock she had sustained, he was taking down the captive to proceed to Eleenalin, when, looking up, he saw the shaggy face of the Piper, like that of a mountain goat, peering over a precipice.

"That leap is nothing to you," cried Hugh, laughing, while Norman blushed like a girl; "but say, shall I get a hammer now, and break these cruel stones all to pieces, for hurting the pretty little foot?"

Norman sprang up to join him, affecting to laugh; and, to conceal his confusion, he began to devour the bilberries Hugh had been gathering to present to the stranger; for he had now seen her, and all the still small courtesies of his heart were called forth. What had been withheld from her beauty, was awarded to her sweetness and winning condescension.

When they reached the island, Flora was busied in preparing breakfast, and the Lady, with her guest, sat in the porch, enjoying the

beauties of a lovely morning. At the sight of her bird, she started up, and uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise, embraced its cage, while she raised her eyes in gratitude to the face of Norman. What of toil and danger would not such a look have repaid!

"You perceive I am not yet cured of my foolish partiality," said she, turning to the Lady; "but this little bird was all I had to love. It sung to me, it played with me, it cheered my solitude, and I believed it loved me more than freedom.—Ah, you little traitor!—but I forgive you, since you have led me to Eleenalin."

Hugh now presented his basket of wild fruit, and, on withdrawing to Moome's hut, acknowledged, that, *next* to the ladies of the *family*, the stranger was the loveliest creature he had ever beheld.

When breakfast was over, Norman, who could form no excuse for remaining at home, contrary to his usual practice, took his fowling-piece, and returned to Kenanowen, while Hugh proceeded up the lake with the skiff, to meet the expected visitor of Mrs Montague. During this absence, that young lady, anxious to invite reciprocal confidence, began to relate

the history of the present inhabitants of Dunalbin.

"I am egotist enough to begin with myself," said she. "Though I am not very old, the lines of my fortune have been somewhat striking. I have seen but eighteen summers, and already have I outlived every friend.

"My earliest recollection is the death of my mother. My father was the cadet of an ancient, but much impoverished family in the north-west of Ireland. My mother was of the same country. An early, and what is called an imprudent marriage, while it secured their domestic happiness, forbade all hopes of advancing fortune. Alas! it was not merely so! poverty stared them in the face, and my father was compelled to accept of a small appointment in India. The bitterest pang which poverty can inflict,—separation from the cherished object of all his affections, was the fate of my father. He left my mother and her infant dependant on the bounty of her own family.

"Fortune, wearied of her cruelty, at length smiled on his efforts. A permanent establishment in Bengal, though it held out no hopes to avarice, seemed enough for domestic comfort, and even elegance; and my mother de-

parted for India. She was advised to leave me in England for education; but that education which estranges a child from the maternal bosom, seemed to her little desirable, and I was the happy companion of her voyage. High in hope, rejoicing in anticipated felicity, did my mother leave England:—my father had fallen a victim to the fatal fever of the country, many weeks before the arrival of the fleet. The frantic shriek of my distracted mother, when abruptly informed of this melancholy event, still rings in my ears. Her death was the speedy consequence of my father's. Thus was I left an orphan, in a strange land, at an age unconscious of an orphan's loss.

"The excellent man, whose name it is my pride to bear, was the friend of my father; and to my dying mother he performed a brother's duty, with a brother's affection. He soothed her last moments with a promise of protection to her child. How zealously, how fully, did he fulfil that promise!

"Mr Montague had been sent out to India a cadet at the age of fifteen. He had never tasted those pure pleasures which flow from the sweet charities, and endearing intimacies of domestic life; but his heart was exquisitely susceptible of their enjoyment. The orphan

child of his friend first awoke the fine sympathies of that generous heart; and on my happy, and thrice happy childhood, was lavished all the tenderness which till then had languished without an object. Had my mother lived, doubtless he would have felt less warmth of affection for his *protegee*;—as it was, I was all his own; the pledge of a friendship which death had sanctified. No one inquired about me, no one cared for me; and the indifference he resented brought me closer to his heart. When urged by his friends to marry and settle in England,—'I will not have lived in vain,' he would say, 'if I train this child to virtue. No, my Monimia, I will not give thee a step-mother, and I know that the youth I have cherished will never desert my grey hairs. Thou hast lived in my bosom, I will die in thine!'—Such sentiments attached Mr Montague still more closely to the charge he had undertaken. The improvement of my talents, the cultivation of my mind, and the forming of my heart to those noble virtues of which his life was a bright example, was at once the business and the consolation of his life.

"It is now three years since declining health, concurring with a wish for the completion of my education, and my final establishment in

England, induced Mr Montague to return to his native country. A half brother, the gentleman who now inhabits Dunalbin, was the only friend that remained to welcome him to England, after an absence of thirty years. We settled in Bath; and my protector, anxious to promote my future respectability and happiness, cultivated the friendship of my mother's family; it is noble;—proud too,—that is, it has all the pride of aristocracy; but the diamonds, and shawls, and gold muslins, of Mr Montague, were very well received, and that *kindness* was vouchsafed to his spoiled girl, and reputed heiress, which had been vainly solicited by her less fortunate mother. My education was *completed*, and I was *brought out* the heiress of a Nabob; and, during a winter in London, and a summer in Bath, Brighton, and Tunbridge, run the *gauntelope* of fashion, and was caressed, and admired, and flattered, and intoxicated; and followed by lovers in abundance. Let me not conceal my mortification; my lovers did certainly drop off on being informed that Mr Montague's fortune was settled on his brother, and that a moderate provision was all I might expect.—Peace to all my fashionable friends! early did they try to teach me wisdom. The illness of Mr Montague put

a stop to the career of dissipation, or Heaven knows where it might have terminated. I was hovering round the crater of the volcano, impelled forward by that feverous restlessness,—that avidity of strong sensation,—that unconquerable desire of feeling one's self alive, at whatever expense of mental agony, which makes drunkards, and gamblers, and heroes;—politicians, boxers, charioteers, heroic lovers, women of intrigue, and men of ambition. My good genius snatched me back. The sober and regulated tenor of my early life was still dear and familiar; and I had the most interesting of all occupations, in watching the declining health of the best friend that ever an orphan was blessed with.

"'What were my feelings, to learn that this dear friend was hurrying to the grave, the silent victim of a hopeless, and nobly suppressed attachment to the creature of his bounty!—I flew to him, I threw myself weeping into his arms.—'My father, my friend, let me be wholly, and only yours! Let the child of your love be the wife of your bosom!' I hid my glowing face on his shoulder; for a moment he pressed me to his heart in silence, and then fainted away. When he recovered, I was summoned to his bed-side. I cannot even yet develope

the nature of my feelings on that momentous occasion. Young as I was, I had been accustomed to receive the homage of my fashionable admirers with sufficient ease and indifference, as the tribute due to my sex; I was now ashamed of my power; mortified to find that generous and lofty mind I had ever regarded with awe and esteem, dependant for its happiness on a young and giddy girl. It was my most anxious wish that I might become worthy of the preference I had unwittingly inspired.

" I found my dear friend greatly altered; the hand of death was upon him. But he was now quite calm; and, with that gentle superiority which ever marked his manners, he led to the subject that throbbed at my heart, and held me in indescribable confusion.——' Monimia, a cruel and mistaken kindness has revealed the secret I wished to carry to the grave. Let us forget it.—Your tender caresses, your innocent endearments, were become fatal to my peace. It was no longer the orphan child of my friend, who imprinted on my cheek the kiss of filial affection. Monimia, I trembled at this discovery,—the happiness of one or both seemed at stake. I sent you from me, and saw you rush on the world, ardent, lovely, attractive, full of all the generous cre-

dulities of youth. My anxious heart followed you with the fond solicitude of a mother, watching over the first faultering steps of her infant,—delighting in its dawning strength, but trembling for its inexperience. Thus, as a parent, did I feel;—but, O my Monimia!—yet let me not shock your gentle nature with any thing so incongruous;—that season is happily past, and it is my *child*, my darling Monimia, I have summoned to the death-bed of her parent and friend.'

"You, Lady, may conceive how much I was grieved and shocked by this solemn warning of death. He who had never lived but for the happiness of those he loved, forgot himself in soothing my griefs, inspiring me with fortitude, and giving me good counsel for the conduct of my future life. Sacred, memorable hours!—Lady, there are sorrows one would not exchange for all of joy the heart can ever feel! When he felt his dissolution approaching, he requested that the ceremony of marriage should unite us by a new tie, desirous, I believe, to soothe my feelings, and spare me the pang of bitter retrospection. On that morning I began to flatter myself with better hopes,—for all that virtue, honour, and tenderness could inspire,—all that gratitude and af-

fection could feel, did I feel for him. From a flattering dream of future happiness I was soon awakened, for the same day saw me a wife and a widow!—My father, my friend, my guide, my husband, expired in my arms! His last glance was fixed on me,—with his latest breath he blessed me!"

Here the youthful widow, overcome by the violence of her feelings, leaned her head on the shoulder of Flora, and wept silently and bitterly. Her auditors, scarcely less affected, discovered that silent and unobtrusive sympathy, so grateful to a delicate mind. After a long pause, she proceeded with her narrative.

"I make no apology, Lady Augusta, for troubling you with the little tale of my sorrows. I have long known and revered your virtues; I am very desirous indeed to gain your esteem, and to that I have no title, save the regard and the name of that excellent man, who was worthy of being known even to you.

"Lady Gordon, the aunt of the gentleman to whom this estate belongs, was living in Bath at the time of Mr Montague's death. She is respectable for her years, and condition in life; and, at this interesting crisis, she shewed me much attentive kindness. I was the more grateful for this kindness, as, with the dazzle

of my fancied prosperity, I lost the countenance of my noble relatives. He who did all for me in wisdom and in love, had no wish to make me a bait to the avaricious or designing. Instead of a wealthy heiress, I was found to be a slenderly provided widow. At first my relations railed at what they were pleased to term his injustice, but ended by recommending retirement, and entire devotion to my brother-in-law, to whose protection I was left, and who was declared the heir of Mr Montague's great wealth. Their indifference gave me little concern;—a solitude where I might weep at freedom, was all I longed for; and, through the boundless indulgence of my brother-in-law, and the friendly offices of Lady Gordon, we became the tenants of her nephew.

" Mr Miles Montague is the half-brother of my dear departed friend,—older, and in every respect his opposite; but of him you may judge when you shall know him. I was earnestly recommended to his care in a solemn dying hour; and, amidst all his oddities, I am certain he feels for me the truest regard; awkward, and even troublesome, in its expression perhaps, but too sincere to be trifled with."

As Mrs Montague uttered these words, Hugh entered to announce the stranger, who was approaching the cottage of Lady Augusta, attended by Norman.

CHAP. XVII.

———"A citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth,
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
One solid dish his week-day meals affords,
An added pudding solemnized the Lord's;
Constant at church and 'change, his gains were sure;
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor."

POPE.

MR MONTAGUE was, to the inhabitants of Eleenalin, an individual of a new class:—low-bred and uneducated; enriched by a life of unremitting attention to the petty details of a mechanical employment; proud of his wealth, but still more vain of the minute economy, and the habitual industry, by which it had been acquired. In figure, he was short, sleek, and round; in mind, ignorant, prejudiced, and vulgar; yet distinguished by great shrewdness, in those matters with which he was conversant, and fortunately destitute of that little-minded domineering arrogance which is too often the

disgusting characteristic of the low-born rich. He was also (luckily for himself) quite devoid of that sensibility which often renders those of his rank jealous and envious of those fine accomplishments, and that legitimate and recognized superiority which they feel, but can never hope to acquire. The mistaken, but happy consciousness, that wealth had placed him on a level with the polite society to which accident had raised him, produced a certain impertinent familiarity, and ease of manner, a fidgetting, insignificant activity, an air of smirking good humour, and self-complacency, as amusing at a first interview, as troublesome and provoking on further intimacy. All his affections, that were not purely selfish, were centered in the lovely young creature confided to his care. He was zealous for her interests, so far as he understood them; vain of her beauty; and had even a vague feeling of exultation in those accomplishments he only valued as they were prized by society.

"So, so, Monimia," said the modern inhabitant of Dunalbin, nodding, as he entered, to his fair relative;—"I have always told you what would happen you in them woods;—lost the cage too, I warrant?"

"Indeed, I have both the cage and the bird,

and, what is more, the pleasure to introduce you to Lady Augusta Macalbin, and Miss Buchanan."

Mr Montague bowed round.—"Servant, ladies, servant. I hope we shall be better acquainted; or, if not, shall not be my blame. I have, to be sure, little time for visiting and revisiting; yet no man is happier to see his neighbours now and then in a friendly way than your humble servant. I lived thirty years in *one* house, and in *one* street, Ma'am, and never had a word with a neighbour but once, which was brought about thus,——"

"Well, well, of that hereafter," cried Monimia; "just now, you must thank these ladies for their politeness to me."

"Surely, Monimia; it is not more my duty than my inclination to thank the ladies, till I can make them amends for their kindness; so I hope the ladies, and the young man also, will give us their good company to a poor dinner at Dunalbin some of these days: *till then*, we must remain their debtors;"—and he made a kind of general bow, and flourished his hand.

The Piper at this moment entered with wine and cake, which he served round; but Mr Montague declined tasting it, alleging, that—"tasting any thing between *meals* put him out

of his way, and disordered his *stomach.*—Not," added he, "that I doubt of the cake being very good cake;—so I hope you will take no offence upon that score. To be sure it is but natural for every man to prefer his own country;—but I assure you, ladies, I have eat very good cake in Scotland, let people say what they will. As to buttering toast, every nation has no doubt its own fashion; perhaps butter may be plentier with us than you.—Well,—all is fair, I have no notion of illiberality;"—and after many other speeches equally delicate and polite, he retired with Hugh to get his *feet dried*, as the streams and swamps of Kenanowen had made him feel very *uncomfortable.* In the hut of Moome, who received him with all the national courtesy, Mr Montague was lost in new astonishment; and examined every thing he saw with stupid curiosity, and ludicrous wonder. In the strange manners of the Highlanders, this "citizen pin-maker," found as much to admire and wonder at, as if, the creature of another sphere, some convulsion of nature had thrown him on this globe.

On returning to the cottage, he was full of "good lacks," and "'ods hearts," and "how was it possible to live in such a droll, out-of-the-way sort of a manner?"

"I hope," said Lady Augusta," you will become reconciled to our manner of life, when you know us better."

"Reconciled, Ma'am! I hope you will not take it amiss, but really, after a man has lived fifty years in London, with all his little comforts about him, to be brought all at once, plump, I may say, to this wild country, without markets, or roads, or bridges, or neighbours; and put altogether out of his own way;—let me tell you, it is neither easy nor agreeable."

Lady Augusta, for the first time in her life, was at a loss how to support conversation. Every observation that she hazarded, by way of experiment, gave rise to details of personal adventures, feelings, and regrets, so unexpectedly introduced, and so strangely expressed; —every thing appeared to her guest in a light so new and unlooked for, that, despairing of being understood, and anxious to observe the common civilities of life, she began to feel that delicate embarrassment into which the easy, coarse confidence of vulgar people often throws the refined and delicate.

"Indeed, it can hardly be expected, that, with habits formed by a long residence in crowded and wealthy society, any one should be easily reconciled to the rough, unaccommodated life,

and dreary landscape, of this country," said Lady Augusta; "I am not so much surprised at your dissatisfaction, as that it should have been your choice to live in the Highlands of Scotland."

"Choice, Ma'am! by no manner of means. This here young lady, Ma'am, is my late brother's, the Nabob's widow;—perhaps you might think her my daughter, for I have been told she is very like me."—Norman and Flora could scarce retain their laughter, while Monimia, putting up her pretty lip, exclaimed,—"Flattering resemblance!"

"However, her own father could not love her more than I do; and if she behave prettily to me," added he, winking to the Lady, "it is hard to say if a real father would do more for her. So, Ma'am, if I came to this country with her, it might perhaps be all along from the desire to oblige her, and be agreeable, and no wish of mine.——I am a free-born Englishman, Ma'am,—a bachelor, at Miss's service;" and he nodded to Flora; "not that I have any particular objection to matrimony; but in the busy time of my life, I had little leisure to think of the ladies; and now, being so long used to a single state, it is hard to say, Miss, how I might take with marriage."——"You

see, Miss Buchanan, you have nothing to expect," whispered Monimia.

"I clear my own way, Ma'am; pay every man twenty shillings in the pound; give the poor their rates, and the king his taxes; keep a good broad-cloth coat on my back, and a plain roast joint and pudding on my table every day in the week,—and am beholden to no man. So, Ma'am, I can keep the middle of the highway, were the king himself passing; unless it were from civility, I might step aside, if I chose to be agreeable. Now, Ma'am, this is what I call being an independent man."

Lady Augusta was in hopes that this declaration of rights would have ended the visit; but Mr Montague, from some observation made by Monimia on the romantic country which she beheld, with all the enthusiasm of a native Highlander, was led to draw a long parallel between the *comforts* of a London residence, and the savage solitude of his new abode. This was a subject of frequent debate between himself and his ward; and he seemed happy to have an opportunity of convicting her of folly, and wilfulness, in her unaccountable preference.

"I'll refer it to yourself, Ma'am.—In London, whatever I wanted,—go to market:—be

it beef, be it mutton,—a pound or a stone;—all is one for that,—'Here is my money.'—'There is your meat:'—no more about it;—and so on of every article needed in house-keeping. But here,—if I want a beef steak, why, I must kill a bullock; if a mutton chop, a whole sheep; and that, common sense must tell you, Ma'am, is both troublesome and very expensive. Then again, in London, since I retired from the *pin-line*, if I wanted to fetch a walk to divert me, and get me an appetite for dinner, I had a clean dry pavement below my foot, plenty of people around me, business going briskly on in every corner;—I could take a peep at 'Change, see and hear what was doing in the world, and return dry and comfortable to a little, snug, well-dressed dinner, piping hot, at my own hour;—but here, I cannot take a step for heath, and stubs, and rocks, and lakes;—dark hills closing round me, wild cows frighting me out of my senses, getting my stockings soiled, and my water-proof shoes wet quite through, among mosses and moors; and not a soul to be seen, save some droll-looking man with a short petticoat, who cannot speak a word of my mother's tongue, and may, for aught I know, be a Frenchman in disguise.—I have always been a regular church-man, Ma'am, of a

morning; for it has always been a remark of mine, that no man throve in business who did not keep church;—but here, should I go, it will take me the whole day, throw me behind my dinner hour, and put me quite out of my own way. Then, Ma'am, you see I was always a person of a very social disposition, when business permitted; but, instead of meeting my friends of an evening, smoking a pipe, and drinking a pot of Calvert's, (which I always chose for my own drinking), talking over the news, cheerfully paying my score, and going home as the watch went ten,—which I call a good hour for a tradesman,—I must ask a party to dinner, and to stay over the night, a practice, to say the best, which I never was used to."

"That was all very agreeable, certainly," said the Lady smiling; "and I shall not attempt to balance advantages."

Mr Montague now proposed to attend his sister to Dunalbin, as his dinner hour drew near; and she reluctantly arose. Norman anxiously examined the countenance of Lady Augusta. It seemed favourable to his wishes.

"Indeed, we cannot consent to Mrs Montague's departure, till she is discharged by her physician," said she; and Monimia sat down with evident satisfaction.——"Here," added

she, " I am absolute :—no one can leave my narrow kingdom without permission, for I can at any time lay an embargo on the shipping. May I venture to hope, that Mr Montague will also remain for this afternoon, and share our family dinner ?"

" Who, *me*, Ma'am ?—I assure you, you are vastly polite ; and I hope you won't fancy me ill mannered or saucy, if I don't stay :—for you see, Ma'am, unless I had had a previous notice, my own dinner will be prepared, and I have no notion of meat being wasted after it is dressed."

" You are quite right," cried Monimia impatiently ; " and now, dear brother, be going, for you are late enough, and I shall make your excuses to Lady Augusta."

" Well, Ma'am, I hope you will not be offended, when Monimia has made my excuses. It is an easy matter for her to stay, for I told her servant to dress no dinner for her till she came home.—You see, Ma'am, we don't live together at all. She has her own table, and servants, and apartments ;—her own establishment ;—though I must think, keeping up two families under one roof is extravagance to a degree.—Now, Ma'am, if Mrs Montague were

as agreeable as I am, one set of servants, and one table——"

"Pray now, brother, a truce with our internal regulation," interrupted Monimia; "it cannot be very interesting to Lady Augusta; and I am certain it is almost time for you to pay your respects to the 'plain roast joint.'"

There was occasionally something in the eye of Monimia, that Mr Montague seemed eager to observe and obey. The least indication of impatience on her part, instantly bridled his eloquence; and he arose to return home again, thanking Lady Augusta for her kindness to his sister, and expressing his wish for "good neighbourhood," and "better acquaintance."

The chance visit of Mrs Montague was lengthened out to a week; and, by that time, all the inhabitants of Eleenalin considered her as a friend of very ancient date. Norman had, in these few days, lived more than in as many years of his former existence. There was, in the manners of Monimia, a versatile grace, a nameless fascination, which gave to the little insulated society a charm, and a zest, it had never known till now. Happy were the domestic evenings of Lady Augusta, when surrounded by her youthful friends. With

the serene delight of a superior nature, she saw their social hours pass gaily away in that endearing, and unrestrained intimacy, in which the unpractised heart unfolds its kindest feelings,—in that innocent and fearless hilarity, which, shrinking from the frown of the world's wisdom, expands only in the genial clime of the domestic fire-side.

"I am too happy to dance to-night," would Monimia say, while Hugh walked before the cottage, playing his evening service to his Lady.

Monimia had stipulated that Flora should return with her to Dunalbin; and leave had been obtained from Buchanan, who was at this time so much occupied in some literary project, that even the society of his daughter was become troublesome.

Attended by Norman, and accompanied by Flora, Mrs Montague returned to Dunalbin. Her frankness, gaiety, and warmth of affection, had already captivated the hearts of her venerable physician and nurse; also of Hugh, who, forgetting her country and birth, had admitted her within the pale of clannish partiality. Many friendly adieus were repeated at the parting of Monimia and Moome, in indifferent English, and worse Gaelic, for each

politely exchanged the language of her country.

"The darling creature!" cried Moome, as she returned from the beach with the Piper; "Did you ever now, Hugh, see any Low-country lady so like a Highland lady?—But it is herself God has blessed with a warm Highland heart. There would she listen to my songs, and try to sing our *luenigs* herself,—and to spin with my distaff and spindle,—and keep me always telling her tales of the CLAN,—though I am no great hand at translations;—and weep over them she would, as if our clan had been her own blood."

Happy in conscious innocence, the possession of an easy fortune, the affection of friends, the elastic spirits of juvenile existence, and that felicitous fancy which ever views the future in the fairest colours, and gives poignancy to every passing feeling of delight, Monimia charmed her young companions with her lively sallies; and, with all the ardour of Highland hospitality, gave them welcome to Dunalbin.

From Montague, their reception was also very cordial. He shook the hand of Norman, and chucked Flora under the chin.——"Glad to see you, Miss:—how dost think would fancy an old bachelor like me,—eh?—If Monimia

don't please me, 'tis hard to say what foolish thing I may do."

Flora was covered with blushes at this strange address, while Montague, laughing heartily at her confusion, begged her not to mind him, as he "was only in jest, and had no *serious* thought of marriage."

"Let me also beg that you will not mind him," said Monimia.—"And now, brother, let us see how handsomely you will do the honours of the castle;"—and she gave him the hand of Flora, while, extending her own to Norman, she flew up the grand staircase.——"My good brother has left the *pin-line* so recently, that he is not yet a man of distinguished gallantry," cried Monimia, as she looked back in her airy flight; "but I have great hopes that he will improve: the electric glance of that blue eye might convey a Promethean spark to the dullest clay. I have been drilling him for some weeks past, previous to his debut at the "NORTHERN MEETING," at which I expect he will be able to dance a decent minuet with old Lady Gordon, and a lively reel with her humble companion, Miss Ursula Sinclair, spinster."

"Indeed, Monimia, it don't become you to speak so slightingly of that good lady, consi-

dering you are a mighty favourite of hers. You see, Miss, when the shooting-season commences, we expect a great many of our quality friends; —for all the gentlemen will come to the moors; —and I have remarked, that in that case the ladies are never far off;"—and he accompanied this civil observation with a laugh, which was meant to increase its point. Flora, half ashamed, and half provoked, could make no reply; and, as Monimia knew that his natural vulgarity, and hardness of feeling, was an invulnerable shield from the playful attacks of witty malice, and the polished darts of polite retort, she generally heard him as if she heard him not.

Before dinner, Mr Montague insisted on the strangers walking out to view his improvements; and they were compelled to follow him. The improvements consisted chiefly of a poultry-yard and piggery; a slight painted paling and wicket, that formed a strange contrast with the massive pile it meant to inclose. The ancient residence of a Highland Chief needed neither walls, nor gates, nor sweeping approaches. His invincible barriers were the affections, and tried courage, of his devoted clan; and his hospitable home stood as open and unguarded as his kindly heart. But this generous

and happy confidence was perfectly inimical to all Mr Montague's ideas of police, security, and snugness; and the neat green paling, on the model "of a friend's at Hackney," was exhibited as a splendid trophy of tasteful improvement.

"We expect some very fine compliments on our magnificence," said Monimia, smiling; "but, my dear brother, I believe we must forgive our friends, for they seem not only astonished, but struck dumb with admiration."

"Aye, Monimia, no doubt we have done something for it. If I agree with Sir Archibald about a sheep-farm, (for you see, Miss, I cannot live without employment), it will go hard if I don't get the building white-washed, and them stumps and weeds grubbed out, that now cover half the walls, and darken the casements."

"White-wash Dunalbin!" exclaimed Norman; "root out the ivy and wall-flowers,—it would be sacrilege!"

"Yes, Sir," replied Mr Montague, who fancied his astonishment arose from the magnificence of the design; "it would no doubt be somewhat expensive, yet I grudge nothing on good lasting improvements. I had always a taste for neatness and comfort; and truly, I

would be quite ashamed, if any of our quality friends surprised us before I had given it a decent, clean, snug look."

"How I hate that Dutch word—*snug*, and every idea connected with it," cried Monimia; "yet a white-walled cottage, and its green paling, is a very pleasing object:—but a white-washed feudal castle!—The tastes of my brother, like the opinions of many worthy persons, though in themselves just and excellent, become absurd and ridiculous, when applied indiscriminately to every variety of circumstance and character. But this plan of beautifying;—have you calculated the cost, brother?—'Begin nothing of which thou hast not well considered the end,' saith your favourite author."

"O yes, Monimia," cried he, pulling an old letter from his pocket, and writing on the back of it; "if a thousand square yards take——"

"Pray don't include my turret;—I have no intention of living in a pigeon-house."

"A pigeon-house!—there now, Monimia, you are obstinate to a degree; ever opposing my schemes of improvement; yet people will talk of your taste and your elegance, forsooth."

"Not in the white-washing line, surely; there you stand unrivalled, and I am all deference. But, allowing that this venerable ruin

should stand the grubbing of the stumps, as you elegantly term them, I strongly suspect that the first hard rain would for ever efface that superb monument of English improvement,—a white-washed castle."

"Od's bob's, now, Monimia, you are in the right. I must knuckle to you at last,—eh?—Would you think, Miss, there was so much wisdom in this little head?"—and Norman felt more displeasure than the occasion justified, at seeing that cherub head shaken betwixt the unhallowed paws of the facetious pin-maker.

Dinner was now announced, and Monimia conducted her young friends to the apartments she occupied, in a remote wing of the castle. They commanded a view of Eleenalin, and the further extremity of the lake; and the prospect was only bounded by the lofty mountains which sheltered the glen. Another opening looked down on the picturesque defile which separated Glenalbin from the strath in which Flora resided. Every thing that could conduce to domestic comfort, and elegant accommodation, had been lavished by Monimia on her gloomy, but interesting residence; every tasteful modern decoration, which could assimilate with its Gothic heaviness, had been bestowed on her solitary home.

"You see I am no claret drinker, Mr Macalbin," said Montague, when the ladies had withdrawn; "but I beg you will not make a stranger of me. A bowl of punch, or a draught of good beer, is what I have always been used to; and at my age,—not that I am an old man either,—a man does not like to be put out of his own way. I don't know if you are a smoker; but, since I *retired*, I have been glad to smoke a pipe or two after dinner, just to pass the time, as it were; for I assure you, Sir, I am often more tired of an evening now, than when I was packing goods from sun-rise to sunset." Norman told him that he was no smoker, that he seldom drank wine, and never in any quantity; and finally begged him to be quite at his ease.

"Well, now, Mr Macalbin, that is what I call being agreeable; so you shall either sit with me in my own parlour,—for Monimia can't endure the smell of tobacco-smoke in her apartments, which is very extraordinary, for I think it very pleasant,—or join the ladies, which will perhaps be more to your liking; for I have often remarked, that young gentlemen, before they can well bear the charges of a wife, have the greatest hankering after the company of the ladies."

Norman, who had often, in the pauses of conversation on pin-heads, and points, and orders, and the club, listened to the heavenly voice which had first awoke his soul in the wilds of Kenanowen, symphonizing the chords of a piano-forte, heard this observation with delight; yet he coloured at its rudeness, while he complimented Mr Montague on his sagacity, and begged permission to join the ladies, since the secret bias of young gentlemen was discovered.

In the drawing-room, he found Flora receiving her first lesson in instrumental music; for Monimia, who was a musical enthusiast, had intreated her to acquire as much musical skill as might enable her to accompany her own soft, full voice, in singing the wild melodies of her country. On the entrance of Norman, they arose to examine the most remarkable apartments of the castle, as he was very desirous to see the scene of some of Moome's most interesting narratives. In the dressing-room of Monimia, hung the portrait of her deceased husband.

"There is his resemblance, who was to me more than a father," said she, in a voice that quivered with emotion.—"Read in his open countenance the worth of his liberal and manly soul. This likeness hangs constantly beside

me. I am pleased to think that I live under the eye of my dear lost friend;—that he is still my tutelary genius."

Norman gazed with veneration and awe on the image of departed goodness;—and they turned to examine another painting.

"This beautiful painting I rescued from the Vandal hands of my brother's house-maid," said Monimia, "whom I found scouring it most notably with sand. It was found among other lumber of the castle; and I confess, that in saving some of its antique ornaments, I have sometimes sacrificed taste to sentiment. Not in the present instance, however, for this painting is beautiful; and I cannot help thinking that I have some recollection of the faces; —some shadowy idea, like that of a distant dream."

"Can you not, through the veil of time and sorrow, discover in Lady Augusta the original of this lovely huntress?" said Norman. "I think I see her in every stage of existence. But I do not know the young hunter." He removed the painting from its place, and on the back, with some difficulty, made out the names of Lady Augusta, and Norman her twin brother, and that the painting had been done in France.

"It is he whose name I bear," said Norman.

"It is you yourself," cried Monimia. Norman smiled and coloured. This idea, vague and illusive as it seemed, gave a throb of pleasure to his heart. What an inheritance would the blood, the name, and the sword of the impoverished Macalbin have been to him!

"I dare not so flatter myself," said he sadly,—"This was the favourite brother of our common mother. I know nothing of his story, but that he was in the service of the exiled English king, and died very early in life. I know still less of the early life of the Lady: her story is doubtless most unfortunate. Moome has sometimes hinted to me, that, after her return to Dunalbin, she was long liable to the most cruel depression of spirits. But from that state she recovered with a fortitude which nothing can shake, for it is founded on the Rock of ages. She now enjoys the perennial tranquillity of a being superior to human passions. Did not the sensibility she discovers to the griefs and frailties of others, convince me that she is susceptible of human sympathies, I could almost fancy her soul animated by pure intelligence: but she unites the wisdom

of age with the generous affections of youth; her soul is an angel's, her heart is a woman's.

The tears of Flora silently flowed, as she gazed on the lovely image of the young, powerful, and happy Augusta; nor was it without emotion that Monimia contemplated the animated features, vivid complexion, and elegance of form, that marked the mountain huntress. She was represented as leaning on a scathed oak, amid a lonely heath; a bow slung across her shoulders, and her fine form vested in green. Norman Macalbin, the other figure in this interesting picture, appeared at that age which unites the strength and vigour of manhood, with the blooming graces of youth. The mountain dirk glittered at his side, his tartans waved on the wind; at his feet panted "the grey dogs."

It was long before the young party could detach their minds from the train of sentiment this painting excited; but Montague at length broke the spell, by summoning Monimia to the tea-table. Her spirits soon became more than usually animated; and Norman again saw the enchanting creature who, in the wood of Kenanowen, had sung with all the simplicity of innocence to a little bird. This was the first time he had strongly felt the

fugitive charm of female gracefulness, or the light, playful, nameless graces of female prattle; when native talent is animated by fancy, and refined by education. Even the oddities of Montague became pleasing, when Monimia deigned, for the amusement of the moment, alternately to rally, ridicule, and mimic, his natural awkwardness, or affected gentility.

Charged with a thousand messages to the Lady, Norman departed at a late hour for Eleenalin. Nor had Monimia forgotten her kind old physician, and the Piper was loaded with marks of her attentive generosity.

Norman begged the Piper to take him up at that point of Kenanowen nearest the island, and hastened to the banks of the mountain stream, to live over in recollection one of the happiest days of his life.—"This is the rock, that the tree which shaded her; here she fell, and here did I find her, pale, bleeding, insensible!"—The heart of Norman was even more affected by the gay and innocent, or trembling, agitated Monimia of Kenanowen, than with the high-bred, beautiful, and bewitching Mrs Montague of Dunalbin. To his mind they represented different ideas, and he almost gladly forgot the latter, to feast his imagination with the insidious recollection of

the former. From a dangerous reverie, which tended to deepen every soft impression, and to interest all surrounding nature in his nascent passion, Norman was recalled by the voice of the Piper.

In the course of their little voyage, Norman recollected the painting, and the resemblance, which was certainly not altogether fanciful, though he feared it was accidental. Hugh said nothing to confirm his hope. The young soldier had died very early in life, and the painting had never been unpacked till now; for, by the time it had arrived from France, misfortune had scattered the family of Macalbin.

CHAP. XVIII.

"I've seen sae mony changefu' years,
On earth I am a stranger grown,
I wander in the ways of men,
Alike unknowing and unknown.
Unheard, unpitied, unrelieved,
I bear about my lade of care,
For silent, low, in beds of dust,
Lie a' that would my sorrows share."

BURNS.

WHILE Flora resided at Dunalbin, Norman spent the most of his mornings at the same place. He had either some book to return, or to borrow; some message or invitation from the Lady; some moss or rare wild-flower, to exercise the elegant pencil of Monimia; some trifling excuse, till excuse became no longer necessary; and habit made his society not only welcome, but desired. Monimia had now imbibed his own enthusiasm for every thing connected with the Highlands. She cultivated the sweet, sad music of that romantic country; delineated its landscape, studied

its language, assimilated even her dress to its ancient costume, and in her bounded reign, and with her thinly scattered subjects, strove to revive the kind and generous spirit of the olden time. Norman was delighted with her rapid progress in his beloved mountain tongue, and never wearied imparting the instruction she so eagerly received. Already could she listen with rapturous emotion to the recitations of Moome,—to those exquisite effusions of genius and sensibility which have "floated down the tide of ages," known only to that peculiar people, who have a relish for their beauties, which no stranger can either feel or understand.

The mornings of the young friends were thus devoted to liberal pursuits, and the acquisition of useful knowledge; the evenings to elegant recreation, and the society of Lady Augusta. In the balmy twilight of that short, sweet northern summer, they often sailed on the lake with the Lady, sometimes landing at a wooded point which tempted a closer inspection, rambling round its jutting headland, till they again met the skiff, rowed forward by the Piper, cheering his light toil with the rowing chaunt. Monimia was certain that the forced pine-apples, at a guinea each,

which she had seen furnishing out magnificent entertainments, never were half so delicious as the bilberries, or wild strawberries, which she gathered in these romantic recesses, and eat with Moome's excellent cream, in the woodbine porch of Eleenalin.

Such evenings, in the uncertain summer of the North, as did not permit these little excursions, were spent in reading and music. In reading to his fair companions, Norman spoke with the vivacity and energy of a man capable of performing the magnanimous actions described by his author; or of avenging that oppression, meanness, and cruelty, which even in idea roused his spirit to indignation. Nor was the domestic evening without diversity. There were indeed no visitors, but to the animating strathspey of Hugh, " the light fantastic toe" of Monimia never wearied of tripping; and with the mirth-loving pin-maker, Flora was sometimes engaged in a very amusing, if not very elegant, operatic exhibition. Montague had now sufficient employment in a sheep-farm, and some sort of society in Macpherson the Innkeeper; and this, with the expectation of the shooting season, his quality friends, and the Northern Meeting,

made the summer pass away more easily than he had hoped for.

About this time, the zeal and the suspicions of Mr Buchanan were awakened, by a very respectable Catholic gentleman, in his neighbourhood, taking extensive farms, and dividing them into small portions, to accommodate a number of poor families, that had been *warned* away from lands now occupied by Macpherson the Innkeeper. Buchanan's bigotry, prevailing over the kindness of his nature, saw, in this generous action, a plot to overthrow the Protestant faith. Lady Augusta endeavoured to reason him out of this absurd opinion; Norman scouted it with disdain; Monimia amused herself with imagining the progress of the revolution to be effected by kindness to poor Protestants, and expressed warm admiration of the means employed; while Montague joined the alarmists,—because he "could see no other motive the man could have; for why, would he not have made more by the land in his own hands, than by letting it out to these beggars?" Macpherson, who cared very little about the national faith, was nevertheless much offended, that the poor wretches he had stripped of their land, still found a shelter in their country, and clamorous in maintaining the plot to be a very

good plot. Thus was the country divided into parties, and Flora called away from her interesting employments, to be the amanuensis of her father, who had determined to warn his countrymen of their danger. Day and night was devoted to the important work; and when it was declared to be finished, Buchanan departed for the Low-country, to superintend its publication, having been persuaded by Macpherson to that measure, and supplied by him with money necessary to defray the expense. Flora instantly perceived many of the bad consequences of this step, but expostulation was vain, and she returned to Eleenalin and Dunalbin.

"Well, my little theologian, I trust you have fully detected the Popish plot?" said Monimia as she entered. Flora burst into tears; "My dear girl," cried Monimia, embracing her, "I am greatly shocked that my levity should thus distress you."

"You have not distressed me, but I am indeed greatly distressed and grieved that my father should wound the feelings of so good a man as Craig-gillian."——"Monro of Craig-gillian?" inquired Monimia, "is that the author of the plot? It is indeed worthy of him.

I only know him from his son, who is one of the most amiable young men I ever knew."

"Our Hector!" exclaimed Flora and Norman in a breath; "Our old school-fellow!—Is he known to you?"

"Indeed he is. To him I owe some of the best pleasures of my life, for he first inspired me with the wish of visiting this country."

The young friends were delighted with this discovery, and Hugh was called in to relate the story of this family. The elder Craig-gillian had been thrown on the world a friendless orphan, in consequence of the fatal transactions of 1745.—"But, go where he would," said Hugh, "and young and destitute as he was,—think you he forgot the blood he was come of, or was the less proud of himself?"

The story of Craig-gillian was brief, but honourable. Stimulated by the pride of ancestry, his perseverance had insured comparative success in life. He had no Craig-gillian to bestow on his son; but he continually impressed on his young mind, that he was still the heir to the name and the virtues of his ancestors. The young man had gone out to India very early in life: his generous ambition, and noble self-denial, had but one object, and Craig-gillian was now the property of his father.——"They

say it is a bad bargain," said Hugh; "but Craig-gillian does not think so. Think you he is less proud of his estate now, than if he had never lost it?"

"I am sure he is not," cried Monimia, her eyes sparkling through tears.

"And if he choose to be good to the poor people, whose fathers lived on the lands of his father,—I hope and believe there is no great harm in that."

"I am certain there is none," said Monimia; and Hugh withdrew, while Flora bewailed afresh the strange infatuation of her father. But even these mortifying recollections had not power long to embitter the young existence of Flora, who, at Dunalbin, soon forgot that there are such things as party-spirit, bigotry, and mistaken zeal, to divide those who practise the same Christian virtues, and inherit the same immortal hopes.

About the end of July, an incident occurred, which powerfully interested the sequestered inhabitants of Glenalbin. The weather, though warm, had been stormy and dark, and the day so rainy, that Monimia and her friend had not been able to visit Eleenalin. In the twilight, Monimia leaned on her casement, watching the volumes of mist which floated along the sides

of the mountains. Suddenly the sound of a harp was heard. Monimia turned round smiling, and beckoned her companion to keep silence. The music died away, and again rose on the breeze.

"Some gallant knight in minstrel guise," said Monimia, laughing.

"A wandering son of song," said Flora, "probably an Irish harper. In this manner they were wont to stroll over the West Highlands; and there are very recent instances of that romantic custom. In this modest manner they solicit admittance into the houses of gentlemen, and none turn a deaf ear to the voice of the bard."

"Nor shall I,—I am delighted with this adventure. It carries one back to the ages of romance and chivalry. I hope our harper is a civilized animal, for I would not be disenchanted for a world."

They opened the casement, and, seated beneath a broken ivied arch, saw a blind, feeble, and very aged man. A coarse, loose dress of russet, sheltered his tall spare form from the blast, that waved the few white hairs which still lingered on his forehead. He leaned pensively on his harp: no one came forth to bid him welcome. His guide, a lovely girl of six years,

sat, wet and shivering, on a stone which had fallen from the wall. The old man seated her on his knee, and wrapped the skirt of his coat round her little naked feet. A dog, the companion of their pilgrimage, and the last friend of their adversity, stretched himself before them. The old man took a crust from his pocket, and divided it between his child and his friend.

"And none for yourself, my grandfather," cried the little girl, taking the bread from her severed lips. The dog, which had eagerly snatched his moiety, now laid it untouched on the lap of the girl, on whom he playfully fawned, while he wistfully gazed on his aged master. The old man kissed the child, and tried to soothe her sorrows, but she still wept.

"And will you stay here all night, my grandfather? And will we never return to our own Castle-connal, where we were all so happy?—this is a bad country, and a bad people."

The girl looked round as she spake of the country, and saw Monimia leaning on the window. She had already learned some of the arts of her profession.—"Play, my father," whispered she, "the ladies listen; play to please the ladies." A crimson flush dyed the pale face of the old man. "Oh! what have I to do with

pride,"—thought he: and he began to modulate the strings of his harp, which, in the querulous murmuring voice of age, he accompanied with the following

SONG.

Oh! ope your hospitable door,
  For I am wretched, old, and blind;
Exiled from Erin's smiling shore,
  And hope and home are far behind.
I drain the bitter cup of grief,
  I eat the bread of penury;
And time, which brings to all relief,
  Has no loved bliss in store for me.

The fury of fell civil strife
  To woe and want my age consigned;
Thrown weeping on the verge of life,
  I wander wretched, poor, and blind.
Erin, alas! I now must shun,
  A sad, forlorn, and blind exile;
Oh! could I once behold the sun
  Sink on my green, my native isle!

No tender claim, no kindred ties,
  Where'er my devious footstep bend;
Of all that shared my early joys,
  None live to hail me "Father!" Friend!"
—None live, my aged griefs to share,
  To weep o'er Erin's wrongs with me;
For dear to me her shamrock fair,
  Her oak, her harp, her minstrelsy.

All withered now, my oaken boughs,
My harp hangs on the willow pale;
For Erin's griefs my heart o'erflows,
Her slaughtered sons I sadly wail;
For dark the days which I have seen,
While Erin, and while Freedom bleed,
Proud England loathed the smiling green,
With native blood she dyed us red.

Tho' fourscore years had blanched my head,
To love my country was a crime;
And happiness with freedom fled;—
But Erin's wrongs are more than mine:—
From Erin's wrongs my sorrows rise,
For all her hopes to me were dear;
Though light has fled my aged eyes,
They ever drop the silent tear.

Those spirits broke fate ne'er could bend,
They fled to death from slavery,
And long I wept each martyred friend,—
But who is left to weep for me?
Oh! ope your hospitable door!
Oh! drop the pitying tear for me!
For I am wretched, old, and poor;—
I live,—and Erin is not free.

Monimia knew somewhat of the sad story of her native country. She had heard of cruel oppression, and desperate resistance; of dark, ambitious, and turbulent spirits, and of others loftier and purer, who had loved Ireland well, but not wisely. All had been swept away in one common ruin. Law, rigid and severe,

cried out that this was necessary and just, and Monimia bowed in submission. But the still, small voice of compassion, pleaded powerfully for unfortunates, who "had done nothing in hate, but all in honour."

Impatiently, therefore, did she listen for the conclusion of the old man's song, and then flew down into the court to bid him welcome. He looked up, and faintly smiled, when he heard her declare herself his countrywoman, and then begged her kindness to his little girl. The child, smiling through her tears, was led into the castle by Flora, while Monimia herself guided her venerable guest. Every thing conducive to his comfort was immediately provided. In few words he expressed his gratitude. His harp was placed beside him, his dog was stretched at his feet before the blazing fire, and his little guide, seated on the knee of Monimia, expressed her satisfaction, and resolution to stay at Dunalbin. A languid smile rose on the interesting features of the old man. ——"You also shall stay, my grandfather," said the child; "this shall be your home; the lady is sweet and lovely."

"It shall, my love," cried Monimia, kissing her; "I hope it will!"——The old man replied not: a solitary tear rolled down his cheek.

The little girl looked in his face with a mixture of pity and anxiety; his wants and his misery had already unfolded her sensibility. She placed a stool beneath his feet, and busied herself in little kindly duties about his person. Still he was silent and dejected.

"I will sing the song you love," said little Mary; and in a soft clear voice she sung,

"Green were the fields where my forefathers dwelt."

The old man patted her head.—"Now, shall this be our home?" said the child, caressing his hand. He sighed deeply.—"My home will soon be the Paradise of my God;—but for you, poor thing! child of an out-law,—guide of a beggar——"

"Her home shall be my bosom," cried Monimia, folding the little girl in her arms. The old man seemed greatly affected; twice he attempted to speak, but was unable.

"I shall try to thank my generous countrywoman to-morrow," said he; and Monimia was glad to escape from his thanks.

In a little while he called, "Where are you, my child?"——"I am here, my father;" and springing forward, she kneeled at his feet, crossed herself, and repeated her prayers. When

she had ended, the old man placed his hand on her head, and blessed her.——"Listen to me, my child,—I have instructed you in the Catholic faith, never forsake it."——"Oh! never, never!" cried Mary.

"In that faith your fathers have lived, and died, and gone to God and his saints: to all it is the faith of truth and holiness, but to you it is also the faith of *honour*. Think of these words when you see me no more, and never forsake the religion of your country and your family."——"Never, never, my father!" cried the child.

Monimia understood these injunctions as partly given to herself. She wished to assure him that she would never seek to sway the opinions of her future *protegee*; but she could only say,—"We shall know each other better." The old man again blessed the child; she pressed her cherub lip to his cheek, and he retired, recommended earnestly to the care of the late Mr Montague's confidential servant, whom Monimia retained in her family.

It was well he retired; for Montague, who had just come home, bustled into the room, expressing his astonishment at her admitting a blind wandering beggar, not only to her

house, but her parlour, and that beggar an avowed Irishman.

"You must forgive me, if I cannot participate in your terrors, as I am unfortunately an Irishwoman myself."

"Aye, true, but not a Papist," replied Montague, somewhat disconcerted; and he withdrew,—"dare-saying he only feigned blindness," and "dare-saying he would try to rob the castle in the night."

Mary, all in tears, bitterly exclaimed against "the *black-hearted* Protestant;" and Monimia, shocked at her language, demanded who taught her such phrases,—"Why *black-hearted*, my dear?"

"Oh, just because they have all black hearts."

"Who said so?—not your father?"

"Oh, no;—but Connor in the cabin, and Connor's wife, and all the children:" and a little history of the cabin followed, by which Monimia learned that many kindly virtues dwelt there, and not a few "manly vices."

"Ah wretched, wretched country!" sighed Monimia; but she soothed the grief of Mary, and tried to eradicate the unamiable opinions imbibed in the cabin. Kindness had already made the child familiar; a little bed was made

up for her in Monimia's own chamber; and, in a few minutes, she sunk into the repose of innocence.

At an early hour, Monimia was awakened by the repeated embraces of her little friend, who clung round her neck with the playful fondness of endearing childhood.

"Lady, I must go to my grandfather."

"'Tis too early."——"Oh, no: I must say my prayers, tie his shoes, and lead him out to a green bank; he sits down, and I tell him where the sun shines. He stretches out his arms, and says,—'There is my country: Father of Mercy, bless it!'"

Monimia was caressing the child, when the old man's dog burst into the chamber, howling piteously. He leaped to Mary, and dragged her forward by the clothes, ran away, and again returned, as if he invited her to follow. Mary bounded after him, and when Monimia had dressed herself, she also followed to the chamber door. She heard the child weeping, and addressing her grandfather; she softly opened the door, and saw the old stranger stiff and ghastly, and the little girl trying to fold his stiffened arms round her. He had been dead some hours. The loud shriek of Monimia, who fell insensible at the foot of the

bed, summoned the servants. She was soon restored to recollection; but the aged man was for ever removed from the joys and pains of mortality. In vain did Mary call on her beloved grandfather to awaken; in vain the dog whined round the bed. Fitzconnal was deaf to the intreaties of affection, and to the voice of friendship.

Mary threw herself on the floor in an agony of sorrow; the dog licked off the tears that streamed down her innocent face, and alternately turned to the bed, gazed at the face of his master, and burst into a dolorous howl. Mary was soon consoled, but the dog still watched by the corpse of his master.

On the third day, Monimia and all her family attended the funeral of the aged man to Eleenalin. The procession was joined by some kind strangers, and by the islanders. Hugh played the coronach, Moome wept, as was her custom at funerals, for Moome was a fountain of tears, and Fitzconnal was committed to earth, unhallowed, save by his misfortunes, and his noble, though ill-directed virtues.

When the ceremony was ended, Hugh set up a rude stone, to tell future generations where the man was laid.——"I also will lay a

stone to the cairn of the stranger,"* said Moome, solemnly placing her stone. Every one followed her example, and Fitz-connal's heap was gathered.

If there be a national custom more affecting than all others, it is this, simple, solemn, and impressive, of adding a stone to a mountain

* The Lowland peasant, to express good-will, says,—" I will dance at your wedding."—The Highlander says,—" *Curidh mi clach ar do chairn.*"

" And Rachel died, and was buried in the Ephrath, which is Bethlem. And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." It is well known how desirous all Highlanders are to " possess their souls in patience" during trouble, and to depart with decency; to be remembered with reverential love, not mourned with impious sorrow. It is, indeed, the familiar care of their whole lives. The bridal linen, when such luxury is known, is generally folded up to shroud the corpse of the bride. I have known solitary women, so miserably poor, that English imagination would be puzzled to find out how they contrived to exist, hoard up a pound or two in the hands of neighbouring gentlemen, for " the decent funeral." This ambition of posthumous fame has gone a good way towards dilapidating *Iona*. The pious Highlander feels no scruples in *lifting* the grave-stone of some reputed king or insular prince, to ornament the remains of his grandmother. A considerable number of these stolen stones may now be seen very far from the sacred island in which they were originally placed.

cairn. * "Where shall I die, and where shall I be buried?" said Norman, while busy fancy reverted to the fate of *her* who slept here with the stranger. The piper drew the sleeve of his *cassock* across his moist eyes, and the females moved away. "Dust was returned to its dust; and the living withdrew, laying it to heart."

* Few years have elapsed since solitary Irish harpers wandered over the isles and west coast. Hence the seeming identity of many Highland and Irish airs. This romantic practice is now for ever abandoned. DOGHERTY's was the "Lay of the last minstrel." Of late years, unfortunate persons of another description have wandered over the same bleak, but kindly tract;—bleeding limbs cast from a mangled country. Among these unhappy individuals, was one of that distinguished appearance, which, once beheld, can never be forgotten. He was remembered by gentlemen of the country, as holding high rank, where rank was the badge of disgrace and rebellion. Yet, though disloyal to Britain, it is probable that he thought himself but the more true to Ireland. But he was now a wandering maniac. He said the sufferings of his country had made him mad; and the Highlanders forgot his crimes, and thought only of his misery.

CHAP. XIX.

"Fair to no purpose, artful to no end."

POPE.

MONIMIA kept her promise to the unfortunate old man. She took the child to her bosom with maternal fondness. Montague was at first sullen; but as he was not ill-natured, the gay temper, affectionate manners, and beautiful form of the little exile, won even his good-will. The little Irish girl was indeed a general favourite; but with the Piper she threatened to supplant all the children in the district.

The shooting season now brought many idle strangers to the Highlands; the time of Montague was occupied by what he called his quality friends, and the peaceful domestic hours of Monimia were continually invaded by an influx of female visitors, who, compelled to live for some months in the country, without talents

either to improve or embellish retirement, were glad to transfer to another the burden of their own inanity.

The Highland moors were become so very fashionable, that many gentlemen annually travelled North; and immediately the ladies were smitten with a taste for the picturesque, the sublime, and the dreary. But it was impossible to gaze for ever on huge rocks, dark lakes, foaming torrents, and mountains in endless expansion. "A Northern Meeting," was now the word; and the good motherly ladies of the country, who had never been able to travel South, were delighted with a cheap opportunity of showing their grown-up girls a little of *life*, and teaching them something of *manner*. The plan had grown in general estimation; for the idle and the young found amusement; the vain a field for display, and the designing a theatre of action. Two rustic coquettes, by the aid of fine complexions, high spirits, novelty, and the Highland fling, had already obtained what were called,—"most advantageous establishments,"—and all the clever, sensible mamma's declared the *countries*,—"infinitely indebted to the public spirit of Her Grace of ———." These rural meetings were no doubt inferior, both in substantial luxury and elegant taste, to the brighter

assemblies of London or Bath; but they had their own charms;—the same vanity, dress, gaiety, scandal, envy, and delight. The higher class, for one week, were unrivalled; supreme over fashion and manners; and the inferior orders busy in acquiring anecdotes, airs, and graces, at second-hand, to excite the astonishment of country neighbours, and amuse their winter solitude.

Neither Norman nor Flora had visited much at Dunalbin for some weeks; but a series of rainy weather had relieved Monimia from her troublesome friends, and the little circle had again resumed the habits of their former life.

One morning they were seated at their usual studies, when a party of ladies on horseback were descried sweeping through the defile, which separated Strath—— from Glenalbin.

"There they come," said Monimia, somewhat peevishly,—"I know nothing so teasing as the affected regard of troublesome people. Two of these ladies are become so very fond of me, that I believe they will soon make me loathe myself."

Norman and Flora rose to go home;—"Nay, I insist that for one day you share my penance: surely *you* are too gallant to

fly the ladies; and for your encouragement, my dear Flora, let me assure you that this fair covey indicates a flight of gentlemen as certainly as the screaming of the gull does bad weather."——The young friends smiled; and walked to the window, to view the fair, and still distant riders.

"These are the Gordons, and Miss Sinclair, the relation and humble companion of their aunt. Of course you know how high-blooded and high-bred they both are. Yet they are essentially different. Miss Gordon is stately, proud, perpendicular, insolent; using the privileges of her birth to excuse her breeding. You, Norman, must adore her, but at a humble distance; she will no more pardon your indifference than your presumption. Flora must not dare to look at her."

"Then for Heaven's sake let me go home."

"Oh no;—her sister will atone for that. She will crave your friendship in half an hour, and vow you her own on five minutes acquaintance, if it strikes her. Maria is little, pretty, good-humoured, vain, capricious; and the animal at least is lively. *You* must flirt, and if you please, you may romp with her. Should Flora snatch out a pearl comb, or pull off a glove opportunely, and so display the most

beautiful flaxen tresses, and the fairest arm in the world;—even she may hope for pardon.—How I loathe affectation! 'Tis woman's easily besetting sin;—I am sure if ever it do appear in me, it must be the affectation of being natural."

Flora smiled, and shook her head,—"But is not this rather, rather——"

"Severe?"—replied Monimia, returning her smile,—"Perhaps so. But really it strikes me as both silly and idle to weep, and wail, and gnash my teeth at the follies of half the world. I do not wish my acquaintances to have faults and follies; but since they are there, if they do not make one laugh, I am sure they are good for nothing else. However, my dear Flora, be not afraid; *morality* is a grave word,—we won't use that; but good taste will keep me from troubling you very often with the amiable qualities of my friends."

"But pray let us have our cues," said Norman,—"you have forgot Miss Sinclair."

"That is odd enough, for I am sure no lady has a more lively recollection of herself. I cannot give you a cue to Miss Sinclair. She is a chameleon, and somewhat more, for she takes not only colour, but form, from the cir-

cumambient air. *Au reste*, she is a maiden lady, well born, and of very *elegant sentiments*; whom my brother, though not remarkable either for one or t'other, could persuade—But hush; they approach;—she is dependent on Lady Gordon."

The door was thrown open, and Miss Gordon slightly bent her towering neck to Mrs Montague, overlooked Flora, but saw Norman young and handsome; and, complaining of fatigue, threw herself on a sopha as elegantly as possible. Maria ran with open arms to embrace her "dearest Mrs Montague," and only gave way to the inquiries and caresses of Miss Sinclair.

"My dearest creature, how have you contrived to exist for the last week?" cried Maria. —"Positively we embraced the first glimpse of sunshine to see that you had not hanged or drowned yourself;—did we not, Sinclair?" Miss Sinclair confirmed this statement, probably forgetting that Miss Gordon's industrious maid had heard Sir Archibald tell his friend and visitor, Mr Mansel, that as their sport lay towards Glenalbin, they would *spunge* on the pin-man and his elegant sister.

Monimia was as grateful for all this kindness as politeness required. Miss Gordon

examined Norman with haughty, yet earnest attention, and stared at Flora with well-bred rudeness. Maria ran across the room, admired the plants, the birds, and the prospect; worked at Flora's frame, and snatched up Norman's book. It was a volume of Gaelic poetry, which Monimia had been reading.

"Good Lard! Mrs Montague," cried she,—"let me hope that you don't convulse your organs of speech with this savage dialect?"

Monimia made a gay reply. She was as unfond of trying to reform the world, as of weeping and wailing over its follies.

"But what," said Maria, in an affected whisper,—"if I should tell Sir Archibald of your elegant language-master?"

The heart of Norman throbbed violently,—his breath came quick; but Monimia did not deign to reply: she looked haughtily displeased; and Miss Sinclair chid Maria for a giddy-brain, while she expatiated on the amazing fondness Sir Archibald had conceived for the country, the love his tenants felt for him, and the various good qualities with which she was pleased to endow him.

Montague at length entered, to pay his respects to the ladies. Maria flew forward, and seized him by both hands, while he stood

like a dancing bear with a pole.——" My dear good man, you must positively give me a morsel of dinner; I am not able to ride other ten miles," cried she.

" Indeed, ladies, I was just come to press you to pot-luck," said Montague, half terrified by the impetuous spirits of the young lady. Sir Archibald and Mansel have sent Monimia a present of game, and invited themselves to a late dinner. They are now on Machry-moor.

" Lard! then we won't stay," said Miss Gordon, her eyes brightening;—but Miss Sinclair was peremptory;—and Miss Gordon " knew there was no peace with Sinclair unless she had her own way;—so it was useless to contend."

Again Monimia was " obliged and honoured;" and she turned her dark eye, full of arch meaning, on the face of Norman.—" Odious customs of the world," thought he.

Till the hour of dinner Maria rattled, sung, laughed, and caressed her dear Mrs Montague; Miss Gordon languished; and Miss Sinclair, who seemed a very *managing* person, attended Mr Montague to view his pigs, poultry, dairy, and wool-loft.

At a pretty early hour for a fowler, Sir

Archibald was announced; and Norman saw the man who had first made his young heart throb with anguish. He was a man between thirty and forty; of fashionable appearance, and *formed* manners. In England he affected the Highland Chieftain; in the country the man of fashion,—one who knew *life*, and loved to enjoy it. His history and character was that of hundreds in England; in the Highlands it was summed up in few words;—"*He had quenched fifty smokes.*"—His attention was solely directed to Monimia, yet he found time to examine her friend with the eye of a critic in female beauty; and Flora's meek face sunk under his undaunted gaze.

At dinner the rustic Norman found that what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, were objects of very great importance. Sir Archibald was eloquent in praise of the veal, mutton, and poultry, of Montague's rearing, and fattening; and forgot even the attractions of his lovely hostess, while he pounced upon moor game, "cruelly spoiled by a beast of a cook." Mr Mansel displayed equal science; but Miss Sinclair, though she agreed that the mutton was most delightful; the veal enchanting; and the turkey, quite a wonder of a turkey; begged to be forgiven, if she owned

that after all, for a family dinner, there was nothing to her taste "like a plain, substantial roast joint."—Norman involuntarily smiled as she turned to see the effect of her observation on her host.

"Gad Sir Archy," whispered Mansel,—"that is a good hit at the *pin-money*. Do give poor old Sinclair a hitch."

Montague had now got his mouth empty,—"You are quite right Ma'am,—nothing like it.—Will you drink a glass of wine with me, Miss Sinclair?—Upon my honesty, you are a very sensible sort of a person. And don't you think now, that for supper,—instead of your pastry and fruit,—a slice of cold meat left from dinner——"

Monimia saw and pitied the dilemma to which he was reducing the politic lady, and smilingly interrupted him.—"I shall not trouble Miss Sinclair to decide against me," said she,—"I plead guilty: at least I own it is much better to those who think so."

Montague was not in the habit of taking much wine, and the gentlemen soon entered the drawing-room. They found Miss Gordon reclining; Maria fluttering about, and *charming* with all her might; Flora with a tambourine, and Monimia quietly seated at the

piano-forte. Miss Sinclair hung over her chair, as much enchanted with her rondo, as with her brother's plain joint.

Miss Gordon was reported to be a wonderful performer, and the possessor of a wonderful voice; and, after an abominable affectation of reluctance, she played and sung. The other ladies followed; and the vanity or ill-nature of Monimia was engaged to display the talents of her neglected friend. Flora sung Scotish airs with uncommon sweetness, truth, and feeling: she had learned as much music as to be able to accompany her voice; and, glad to escape the pain of being solicited, she sat down, though her eyes reproached Monimia. She sung the "Lone Vale;" and Mansel,—a good-natured coxcomb, whom the smart uniform of a dragoon regiment had transformed into a hero,—Mansel declared himself charmed. He had both a heart and an ear for music, and his taste, by all who pretended to taste, was allowed to be exquisite.

"Aye," said Monimia, beaming with triumph; "we scientific folks are fairly eclipsed here;—the woods breed nightingales."

"Faith, Belle," said Mansel, turning to Miss Gordon, "you must throw all your music into

the fire. This is a million times better than your flourishing bravura."—Miss Gordon had sung a fashionable bravura song.

Miss Gordon and her sister were portionless, but they had beauty and blood; and their aunt, in her zeal to extend and strengthen the family connexions, by their establishment, had speculated on *accomplishments* to the very bottom of her purse. Their music-master was the most fashionable in London. It was not wonderful that Miss Gordon pouted.

"Pray, who is this little syren?" said Mansel, in a loud whisper to Miss Sinclair. Flora lost all the brief reply, but—"of a poor schoolmaster;—but Miss Gordon has dropped her glove."—The glove lay for Mansel.

"Whew!" whistled he, "Blood!—who cares for blood now, but in a horse. Youth and beauty are all in all." This respectful observation explained the speech of Miss Sinclair.

"What charming spirits!" said Miss Sinclair; "I wish our sweet Bella could share in them. Poor, dear girl, pining off her feet;—Oh you men! you men!"

"The stale farce of falling in love,"—thought Mansel. But, still secretly flattered with the conquests of his eyes, he approached the sweet

love-lorn Bella, and would probably have returned to his allegiance, had he not been haughtily repulsed. He intreated Flora to sing, and Miss Gordon ordered her horse. She was "already too late, and to remain for the night was impossible."

Sir Archibald remonstrated, her sister fretted, the perennial smile of Miss Sinclair fled, and Mansel, in the hope of remaining, was all humility; but the lady was inflexible. Sir Archibald could not permit his sister to go home unattended, but, as he strode past, he whispered in her ear,——"Miss Gordon, if you fancy ill-humour will promote your interests, you are *damnably* wrong. Learn to control that imperious temper. Believe me, you cannot *afford* to keep it."

The eyes of the Lady flashed, and her cheeks glowed; while her sister and Miss Sinclair,—who quickly repaired her smiles,—tried to engage Mrs Montague to return the visit. Monimia formed many excuses, but Montague promised for them both.

The eyes of Maria discoursed eloquently to Norman; Mansel kissed the glove of Flora; Sir Archibald bowed on the hand of Monimia; and, to the joy of all three, the party were at last mounted, and out of sight.

The spirits of Monimia rose as their figures lessened. She locked up the piano-forte, tossed away the music books, and, by greater softness of manners than she had ever displayed, sought to indemnify Norman for the chagrins of the day. In their twilight saunter, he found her arm within his own. When they parted, her hand slid into his. Sir Archibald indeed had taken, and held that hand, but he fancied her look more soft and touching, her manner more quiet; and these observations began to be interesting. With a short quick sigh he saw her leave the beach, where he embarked with Flora.

It was now the latter end of August; the weather was uncommonly fine, and the preceding rains had preserved the lively verdure of early spring. Norman requested Hugh to call him by sun-rise next morning, and proposed a very long excursion among the hills.

"We shall see, darling," said Hugh; and next morning he found that the Piper and the skiff had both disappeared. All day he was kept an impatient prisoner on Eleenalin. About six o'clock Hugh appeared, seemingly so satisfied with himself, that Norman knew not how to be otherwise.

"If the Lady would have no objection that

I should row herself and the family to the isle of the Druid," said Hugh, "the night is so lovely."

The Lady had no objection; and, attended by Moome, Flora, and Norman, she entered the skiff, without perceiving the knowing looks of the Piper.

The isle of the Druid, or, as it was sometimes called, the isle of the *Beal-tien*, was an islet in the mouth of a bay of the lake. It was very small, but finely wooded, and adorned with a strand of beautiful white pebbles.

Many ancient superstitions have now dwindled down into infantine observances. *Beltane* is not kept in any part of the Highlands; but, on May-day, the children light fires in sequestered spots, and cook little feasts of eggs, with which they treat each other, and which they proudly spread before their friends. Eggs are dressed in every form, and every good woman in the country contributes to the long gathered store. In a *lown* recess of the isle of the Druid, Norman, in his boyhood, had annually lighted his fire, and spread his fairy banquet before the Lady, Moome, Mary, his nurse, and other friends. The mossy stones still lay scattered about, which had formed their seats.

On this islet Monimia, who had never ventured to invite the Lady to Dunalbin, proposed to receive her visits. By the assistance of the Piper, and her servant, a little hut had been reared of birch and willow twigs, interwoven with fresh heath. It was in the form of a rude pavilion, open to the side of Eleenalin, and supported by pillars of silver-barked birch, the foliage of which was not yet faded. Hugh had worked late and early with the ardour of a *brownie*; the seats of wattled work, covered with skins of wild-deer, were the labour of his hands, and the whole was happily accomplished in profound secrecy; for Norman, who had viewed its progress, was too good-natured to see any thing. The Piper had laid in a store of turf, lighted a fire, and left Monimia and Mary Fitzconnal making tea, coffee, and spreading their rustic board with cake and sweetmeats.

A blue smoke was discovered rising among the wood in the isle of the Druid, and, as the boat approached, a fairy Naiad was seen to fly from the strand. Hugh feigned ignorance, the better to enjoy the raptures of his friends; and when the grand discovery was made, the exclamations of Moome, the delight of Flora, the benevolent smiles of the Lady, and the

laughing eyes of Norman, abundantly repaid the efforts which silence had cost.

"This is charming !" cried Flora,—"it reminds one of the Elysium at Clarens. We only want lovers to sigh in that sylvan bower, and nightingales to sing among the bushes."

"Lovers we do not want," said Monimia gaily; "I am certain we are all very sincere lovers; only, instead of sighing, we shall laugh; and my kind Moome shall be our nightingale."

"That I will, darling creature," replied Moome; "you shall have the whole of 'The Maid of Duart,' this night, in this sweet shealing."

"Apropos !" cried Flora; "what shall we call it?"——"The Grotto of Calypso," said Norman.

"And whether will the Piper or you be my Telemachus ?"——"I must not be judge in my own cause," replied Norman, smiling. She looked to Hugh.——"With your leave, darling, I'll be any thing you please," said the good-natured Piper, who knew nothing about Telemachus.

"I am sure, Hugh, that is very kind in you; and when I turn Calypso, you shall be my Telemachus :—but what says Flora ?"

"The Temple of Friendship," replied Flora.

"Grottoes and Temples!" cried Monimia. —"Nonsense! I dislike fictions of sentiment of all kinds. Why not love a 'heath shealing,' as well as a pompous temple, or a sentimental grotto. When the eloquent enthusiast, to whom Flora alluded, makes his Julia parade his Elysium, her Saloon of Apollo, her Burgundy, and her Rhenish, I think he is guilty of a capital sin against the simplicity he professes to adore. I could call my birch wine Madeira, nay, Imperial Tokay; but I am certain Hugh would love it much better, called merely what it is,—the birch wine of Glenalbin."

"Yes, by Mary, and that I would, darling," said Hugh; "sweet it is, and good, no doubt, for women and childer; yet, by your leave, for my own taste——" and he hesitated.

"Aye!" said Norman, smiling significantly, while he turned to Monimia.—"Well, the conclusion is, that a man of simplicity, and unsophisticated sentiment, prefers *whisky* to the birch wine of Glenalbin."

"Most lame and impotent conclusion!" cried Monimia, protesting against the unfairness of this inference.

"Don't heed their laugh, my love," said

Lady Augusta; "You were quite right. Among all your amiable qualities, I must admire the cheerful good sense which distinguishes your manner of thinking. I like to hear things called by their true names; it is no inconsiderable proof that they are estimated at their real value; we shall adopt Moome's name,—'Monimia's Shealing,'—and prize it, because it is hers, beyond all the temples and grottoes in the annals of sentiment."

Every one could appreciate the delicate kindness to which this sylvan hut owed its erection.——"Monimia has triumphed!" cried Norman, as he placed her at the head of her rustic board, more lovely than all the goddesses of story; her eyes beaming with kindness, her cheeks glowing with rosy confusion, and her young heart throbbing with innocent pleasure.

At table, the conversation again reverted to Rousseau. In France, Lady Augusta had seen, admired, and pitied, that "*wise* wretch."—Insensibly she began to speak of that period of her life; and the party became thoughtful and sad.

"Let us dismiss this topic," said the Lady;—"my Monimia deserves to be more power-

ful than the Eastern Seged. He commanded, but she invites her friends to be happy. On some future evening, I will tell my young friends the story of my early life. The time may come when it will be useful,—but it cannot be twice told."

Moome, who had listened with intense anxiety to these observations, saw that a cloud was gathering on the spirits of the party.

"Now, darling, with your leave, I shall sing you 'the Maid of Duart,'" said she to Monimia; "and as I am fond to suppose the Piper will be thinking of digging the roots of the water-lily for my own dyeing, I will not begin till he goes."

Hugh, who had been the attendant on the party, smiled as he laid down his pipe, and repaired to the strand, to make war on the lovely flower which adorns "the mountain-circled lochs."

"Then I will follow," said Norman; "and, St. Peter to speed! bring you trout for supper, more exquisite than that of the lake of Geneva."

"If you are cruel enough to catch it, you may eat it," cried Monimia gaily, "for I will not be your Julia——" and, abruptly stopping, she blushed the deepest crimson.

"Well!" said Norman, pursuing her meaning and her down-cast eyes with a smile of tender archness, but a palpitating heart,—"You will not be my Julia;—what then?"

"I mean, that I cannot understand the *superfine* sentiment, of permitting a harmless creature to be catched and tortured for amusement; and then,——but I am sure you remember the sentimental scene to which I allude."

"I have often heard ladies accused of catching and torturing *harmless animals* for mere amusement," replied Norman, laughing. —"But you would kill them outright,—would you?"

"O! you know what I mean;—but Highlanders are privileged to dream dreams, and use similitudes," cried Monimia, with her usual vivacity; "but I have a plain English understanding; and my brother, to whom you promised the fish, a plain English stomach. So march;—trout is better than sentiment."

He went away; Lady Augusta smiled, but a melancholy idea entered her fancy;—"I must tell them my story," thought she.

Moome seated herself on the turf at the feet of her ancient lady, and resumed the dis-

taff and spindle, which accompanied all her walks.

"With your leave, my darling, the Lady herself will explain the *deep* Gaelic of the song. Many in the countries themselves do not understand that, dearest; so no fault to you."

In the Highlands, there is but one sort of literature (if it may be so called) for the vassal and his Lord. Every class utters the same sentiments, clothed in the same words, and expressed in the same accent. There are no Miltons and Popes for the tasteful and educated; and ballads, "Proverbs," and "Seven Champions," for the vulgar. Hence an identity of tastes and attainments, which, however lowly the condition, elevates the intellectual being to the level of the highest, and induces the ennobling consciousness of equality with all that is really exalted.

Though the beauties of Gaelic poetry are by no means quaint or metaphysical, they do not always lie on the surface. In fine perception, and lively sensibility to a felicitous image, or a delicate *trait* of sentiment, the vassal may indeed excel his Lord, from having studied more profoundly that figurative, bold, and *epithetical* language, technically

termed *deep Gaelic*, which Moome now requested her lady to explain.

"And my little Mary will, I hope, be permitted to listen?" said Monimia.—"She has given a noble proof of strength of mind, in keeping the secret of the Druid's isle; and if she did tear all her frocks carrying heath to the Piper, the wish to oblige is always amiable; besides, I am certain she will mend them very neatly."

"Indeed, indeed she will," said Moome; "A warm-hearted darling creature she is, God bless her!"—and Moome began her descant, which is thus translated.

THE MAID OF DUART.

A BALLAD.

PART I.

LIST ! Ladye, list my roundelay,
  A tale of love, a tale of woe,
While sad I tell what erst befel
  The blue-eyed maid and young Lochawe.

The merry barge-men raise the sail,
  Light bounds the bark from Oban's bay,
And, dancing in the summer gale,
  Skirts the grey rocks of Kerrara.*

" With sounding horn and sweeping harp,
  " With vassals shout and pibroch's blow,

* The places alluded to in this Ballad form a fine tract of mountainous scenery, stretching along both sides of the Sound of Mull.

"The Duart hails thee at his gate, *
"Thou gallant Chief of green Lochawe. †

"Strike, strike the harp! thou aged bard,
"Till floats his war-fame high in air!
"Welcome to Duart's bannered hall,
"Brave Chieftain of the raven hair!

"Peace dwells in blue-eyed Moina's bower,
"The battle's din has ceased afar;
"With dark-haired Fillan's hardy clan,
"No more we wage the mountain war."

Sweet Moina, Duart's lovely heir,
Sat lonely in her bower;
Swift she descends, and graceful bends,
As Fillan reached the tower.

"All hail! all hail! thou Lady bright!"—
"All hail! thou Chieftain bold!
"To Duart's hills from far Lochaue,
"Has Fillan's war-fame rolled."

Loud swells in hall the wassail roar,
Young Fillan brims the goblet high,
To pledge the lady of his love,
Sweet Moina of the dark-blue eye.

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* Castle Duart was formerly the residence of the Chiefs of the Clan of Maclean.

† Lochawe was the ancestor of the present family of Argyle. The traditionary account of the beautiful expanse of water so named, is one of the finest fictions of the bard of Selma.

'Twas brighter than the bright blue heaven,
  That eye which on the Chieftain rolled ;
'Twas softer than the gale of even,
  That sigh which Moina's passion told.

That bosom, heaved with infant love,
  Was lovelier far than Appin's snows ;
That beauteous cheek of changeful dye,
  Than pale edge of the mountain rose.

'Twas morn ;—the sun in glory blazed
  O'er hill, and rock, and castled piles ;
And far in ocean dimly gleamed
  The dark Hebudes' misty isles.

From smoking hamlet, airy sheal,
  Sped many a war-worn mountaineer,
To join the Duart's hunting train,
  To rouse again the bounding deer.

The blue-eyed maiden graced the throng,
  Light from her shoulder hung the bow ;
A lovelier pair had ne'er been seen,
  Than Moina and the young Lochawe.

Her hunting-garb was silken sheen,
  And waved amid her glittering locks
The mountain-bonnet's snowy plume,
  As wild she bounded o'er the rocks.

'Tis sweet to see that Highland maid
  Through breezy scene so frolic glide,
Like hovering sprite on mountain's brow,
  Or fairy by the green hill's side.

'Tis brave to see that mountain Chief
  So proudly dight in hunting trim,

While joy beams in his eagle eye,
And life beats wild in every limb.

Of horn, and hound, and hunting train,
What boots it here for me to tell?
Of bugle's blast, and whizzing shaft,
And many an antler'd head that fell?

Mine is, alas! a simple lay,
A tale of love, a tale of woe!
List, while I tell what erst befel
Sweet Moina and the young Lochawe.

The chace is o'er,—the blithesome train
All jovial seek the Duart's tower;
In festal mirth and choral strain
So gaily sped the wanton hour.

The feast is high in Duart's hall,
Flows swift the brimming shell;
But Fillan roves, with the maid he loves,
The wild sequestered dell.

Deep, dark, and narrow, was that glen,
Huge rocks athwart their shadows flung,
And shifting lights of magic glare,
On crag, and copse, and summit hung.

Soft falls the eve,—the air is balm,
And devious onward still they rove;
Sweet Moina's sigh, and kindling eye,
Confess the hour and power of love.

O! sweet the hour, the feeling sweet,
That whispering woods and streams inspire!
As if the minist'ring sprite of love
With angel wing had swept the lyre.

O sweet the hour! thou blue-eyed maid!
When, screened beneath the quivering bough,
With soul attuned to love and joy,
Thou trembling heard'st thy lover's vow!

PART II.

Alas! that aught so sweet as love
Should ever work a maiden woe;
That lovely woman's yielded charms
Should quench the flame they gave to glow!

Nine times in dark Loch Etive's wave
Yon moon has dipt her quivering horn,
And nine times wheeled her silver orb
High o'er the misty hills of Lorn.

O pale, pale now, the rosy cheek,
Where Fillan's lip had fondly hung;
O woful now the gentle heart
That yielded to his guileful tongue!

Matured is Moina's maiden shame,
And deep, and deeper is her sigh;
More pallid yet the faded cheek,
And wilder still the dark-blue eye.

" Now say, now say, thou Lady gay,"
(Thus spake her ancient Moome),
" Why heaves that sigh, why fills that eye,
" Why gone thy maiden bloom?

"Why hast thou doffed, thou lovely maid,
"Thy girdle of silver sheen,
"That late embraced thy slender waist,
"And robe of the velvet green?

"Why loosely wave the golden locks,
"That glittered in pearly braid;
"Oh! why a wo-worn lonely ghost,
"Dost roam in the murky shade?"

No word she spake, no sign she gave,
Her looks were fixed on heaven,
But her deep, deep sigh, and glaring eye,
Have fearful answer given.

She's turned her to the rampart high,
To wail her virgin shame;
From Ardtornish hall, and castle wall, *
There blazed a bickering flame.

It tinged the Lady's storied rock, †
Glimmered on ocean blue,
And far on Lismore's holy isle, ‡
A magic radiance threw.

---

* Ardtornish is a ruinous castle in Morven, nearly opposite to that of Duart.

† "The Lady's storied rock," is a bleak crag in the Sound of Mull, at no great distance from Duart, too much celebrated in the feuds of the contending clans of Maclean and Campbell, to require any description.

‡ Lismore, literally the great garden, is a fertile little island near the mouth of the Sound, where the Roman Catholics have still a sort of college.

"Come tell to me, my aged Moome,
"Why from Ardtornish tower,
"A lovely light thus blazes bright,
"And from Bragela's bower?

"The warder winds a merry blast:—
"Hark! now I list the swell
"Of festal throng, of choral song,
"And joyous chapel bell."

"God give thee peace, thou Lady fair!"
She said, and shook her head;
"To-night the dark-haired Chieftain there
"Does proud Bragela wed;—

"To-night sleeps in Bragela's bower—"
But that Lady shrieking fell;
While her frantic cries, and her agonies,
The guilty secret tell.

Shivered and shook her tender frame,
All as she bended low;
With a mother's pain, but a virgin's stain,
Gave a keener mental throe.

They hied them to an ocean-cave,
Loud blew the wind and high;
O the tempest's rave, and the wild sea-wave,
Drowned Moina's wailing cry!

The sea-wave drowned her wailing cry,
And her sireless babe was born;
While his false father's bridal blaze,
Ruddied the hills of Lorn.

"O list, O list, thou sad Ladye,
"Thine infant's feeble cry!

" O look on Fillan's raven hair,
" On Moina's dark-blue eye !"

" And this to me, thou hoary wretch !
" I boast the Duart's blood ;
" And by Mary's might, that infant wight
" Shall sink in the roaring flood !

" How should I tame my haughty soul,
" The vassal scorn to bear ?
" How shrink beneath the scowling glance
" Of low-born Lowlander ?

" How should I blanch thine aged cheek,
" Thou brave grey-headed man ?
" How live accursed, the foul reproach
" Of bold Clangillian ?

" Not mine to lower a guilty eye,
" To bide the brand of shame ;—
" Oh God ! to brook the taunting look
" Of Fillan's wedded dame !"

" Christ give thee peace, thou sad Ladye,
" And thy soul to bliss redeem !
" Oh ! Fillan's blood, with the Duart's good,
" Rolls here in a mingling stream !"

" Nay, stint thee, stint thee, prating nurse,
" Or dread my maddening ire ;
" Would that the hated infant heaped
" False Fillan's bridal fire !

" Then turn thee, turn thee, feeble wretch,
" Hurl it into the wave ;
" False Fillan's hair !—nay, stint that prayer,
" Not Heaven itself shall save."

" O kiss thou first his baby lip !
  " O cross his baby brow !
" And bless him in our Ladye's name,
  " So keep thy desperate vow."

She clasped the baby to her breast,
  They were for ay to part,
And the flood-tide of a mother's love
  Came rushing o'er her heart.

O ! who may trace the emotions wild,
  On that pale face which play !
As lustres in a northern sky
  Flash,—flicker,—start away.

" Son of my love, son of my hate !
  " My pride, my curse, my joy !
" Die all that may, live all that can,
  " My child, thou shalt not die !

" A long farewell, my aged Moome,
  " My blessing's all my *fee ;*
" Sweet Heaven thee speed in the hour of need,
  " As thou hast done by me."

She clasped the baby to her breast,
  And as spirit swift she past
From that eerie cave, where the wild sea-wave
  Sung to the midnight blast.

O short her flight ! at the beacon height
  She sunk on a mossy stone,
Her last to gaze, while morning's rays
  On Duart's castle shone.

" Farewell, farewell, my father's hall !
  " Farewell my mother's bower !

"My lofty hopes, my mountain joys,
"My maiden pomp and power!

"No more in Duart's festal halls,
"Shall Moina's steps be found;
"Oh! never shall thy echoing walls
"Ring to my wild harp's sound!"

Weeping and wild, the vassal train
Search cave, and cliff, and lonely grove;
But vain,—'twas said the blue-eyed maid
Had wandered with a fairy love.

By moon-light, from the haunted hill,
A magic harp was heard to moan;
And starts the lated mountaineer
At fleeting wraith, and ghastly groan.

Three times was heard the fated din,
Fleet Ewan's charger thundering past; *
Three times the sprite a cronach yelled,
Then shrieking fled in rattling blast.

The Seer has seen a phantom train,
Where round Inch-Kenneth breakers roll;

---

* "Fleet Ewan's charger;" this superstition is connected with the family of Maclaine Lochbuy, rather than that of Maclean Duart. Ewan-caen-beg, or "Hugh with the little head," is supposed to be an ancestor of the family of Lochbuy. Before the death of any of his numerous descendants, he is still heard thundering past their dwellings about midnight. The noise of Ewan's horse is easily distinguished, as he is shod with iron, a formality which is never observed with the small horses of the islands.

Iona's Monks have masses said,
  Three times for Moina's parted soul.

Now sad the Duart takes the field,
  Reckless the hero bownes him home ;
What eye shall watch his far approach !
  O ! who to give him welcome come !

Fled, ever fled, the joyous days,
  When blooming, beauteous Moina, ran
To hail her Chieftain's glad return,
  To swell the triumphs of her clan.

How proudly heaved her maiden breast,
  What glories filled her flashing eye,
When, sweeping down the mountain's bent,
  That conquering clan would homeward hie !

Her heart leapt to the target's clank,
  Her foot sprung to the pibroch's swell ;
How richly glowed her lovely cheek,
  The triumphs of her sire to tell !

Now sad the Duart seeks his tower,
  No daughter smiles the loved reward ;
Where hovered late the aerial form,
  A sullen warder rounds his guard.

PART III.

O WHO is she, that frantic maid,
Skims over moss, and moor, and dale?
Hark! as her shriek of wild despair,
Rung the grey rocks of Scallasdale. *

A *currach* rocks in ocean-cave,
Desperate she starts the glancing oar;
Lists but the impulse of despair,
And madly rushes from the shore.

O softer yet, thou southern breeze,
That flitt'st through Morven's green-wood bowers!
O smoother yet, thou cresting wave,
That bear'st the maid of Duart's towers!

Where hast thou wandered, woful maid,
Where do thy tears in secret fall,
Whose beamy glance, and frolic dance,
Were late the joy of Duart's hall?

Deep in Glen-Bellart's dreary glen,
The hunter views an *Arrie* low;
Oh! there her sireless babe she tends,
Poor victim of the false Lochawe.

* Scallasdale is a romantic pastoral spot on the coast of Mull, where the Sound, only two miles in breadth, divides it from Morven. It is the paternal farm of Captain L. M. who fell so bravely in the field of Maida.

Gloomy and ghast, a lonesome wild,
  The hill-fox howls round Moina's bower!
The yelling eagle rears its brood,
  With her, the heir of Duart's tower!

Poor wretch! how tamed thy maiden pride,
  How haggard wild the dark-blue eye!
The blasted heath thy couch,—thy board
  The berries of the hills supply.

" O softly sleep, my baby boy,
  " Rocked by the mountain wind!
" Thou dream'st not of a lover false,
  " Or a world all unkind.

" O sweetly sleep, my baby boy,
  " Thy mother guards thy rest!
" Thy fairy clasp, my little joy,
  " Shall soothe her aching breast.

" Wake, wake and smile, thou baby boy,
  " My heavy heart to cheer;
" The wintry blast howls on the hill,
  " The leaf grows red and sear!

" O tell me, tell me, baby boy,
  " How shall I hear thy cry,
" When hunger gnaws thy little heart,
  " And death lights on thine eye?

" Oh! was it meet, my baby boy,
  " That thou such *wierd* should'st *dree*?—
" Sweet Heaven forgive thy false father,
  " His wrongs to thee and me."

Thus wild and sad that Lady sung,
  All alone in the eerie den,
When dark-haired Fillan's hunting train
  Dash down the echoing glen.

Startling she flies, and shrieking cries,
  "Welcome my fated hour!"
And as arrow fleet, her trembling feet
  Have borne her to the shore.

She stands where, round the Calliach's head, *
  The booming billows wildly play,
With sweeping dash, and roaring crash,
  Rebound, heave on, and burst in spray.

With dirge and knell, and cronach's swell,
  The princely Duart's found a grave;
Sweet Moina, and her baby boy,
  Unheeded float on the broad sea-wave!

And that broad, broad sea, has waves enough
  To wash her honour's deadly stain;
Thus may'st thou deem, thou gentle maid,
  Who list'st my legendary strain.

---

* The point of Calliach, or of the Beldame, is a bold, and very precipitous headland, the most westerly point of the island of Mull.

Inch-kenneth is a delightful little islet, the burial-place of the Chiefs of Maclean.

Moome received the thanks of Monimia for her performance; and, as it was now getting dark, Mary summoned Norman and Hugh from the shore. Mary wished to sleep in the shealing, and to live there for ever. Mrs Montague promised that she should visit it very often; and, having put the Lady and Moome ashore at Eleenalin, Norman attended them home to Dunalbin. Montague was from home, and he did not enter; but, on the threshold, Mary enjoined him to come and hear her lessons to-morrow, that he might judge if she did not deserve to visit the isle of the Druid. ——"Not to-morrow, but next day," said Monimia, and Norman bowed and departed.

Norman did not forget the request of Mary Fitzconnal. On entering the castle, he met Mr Montague, puffing, blowing, wiping his brows, and exhibiting every symptom of awkward passion.

"So Macalbin, I hope you are come to talk reason to Mrs Montague;—such cross-grained perverseness!—because, forsooth, I won't suffer her to ruin herself with her own two hands. Sell her lute, indeed!—she puts me in a passion fifty times a-day; and I'm sure there is not a sweeter-tempered, patienter man in existence, when I get my own way of things."

In testimony of this amiable temper, he violently flung open the drawing-room door, and discovered Monimia rattling over the keys of her piano-forte, and singing that lively song of Burns,

> "O for ane-and-twenty, Tam!
> I'll learn my kin a rattlin' sang,
> Gin I saw ane-and-twenty, Tam."

The feelings natural to a delicate mind made Norman reluctant to enter, but the good-humour of Monimia reassured him; and, after a few minutes spent in reproach on the part of Montague, and in happy retort from his sister, he learned, that she had not only refused to attend the Northern Meeting, but spent the money intended for dresses in the purchase of *wool!*—This wool was to be fabricated into coarse stockings; and spinning and knitting was expected to afford an humble domestic employment to the women and girls scattered over the district. Monimia protested that she had not been, nor would she be, a farthing out of pocket by this little scheme of industry,—that time was all it required from her, and that she had to bestow.

Montague was not so to be satisfied.—"Had she spent the money in making herself smart,"

said he, stumping about,—"or getting things like her *quality*, I would not have minded;—but to throw money away on every idle fancy!"

"This scene must be wonderfully entertaining to our guest," cried she, "but I must still the tempest;" and she again began,—

"Hey for ane-and-twenty."

There was something so irresistibly comic in the whole scene, that Norman could no longer keep from laughing; Monimia caught the infection, and could scarce go on with her song. The provoking song, and this ill-timed mirth, brought the indignation of Montague to a climax.

"Mighty fine, Madam!—Mighty fine!—Laugh away!"

"I am sure, if it would do any good to spoil my eyes, after you have spoiled your temper, I am ready to cry to oblige you."

"Your eyes, you perverse baggage!" said Montague, in a tone half sulky, and half tender,—"You know I am too fond, and too proud of yourself and your eyes; and you take advantage of that."

"There is kindness in this, though," said Monimia, rising and taking his hand; "I am

sure that I also am very fond of myself, so why dispute?"

"It is all along of yourself, Monimia. You know that I am one of the best-tempered men alive, when you don't contradict me."

"Exactly my own case.—Well, let Mr Macalbin witness our reconciliation. Two gentle-tempered beings like us can never again quarrel."

"I hope not: but, at any rate, it won't be my blame; and, to prove that I forgive you about the wool, I shall advance you fifty guineas—"

"O, I shall wait till the money is due me. I deserve to suffer for my indiscretion."

"To fit you for the Northern Meeting, I mean; you know I have set my heart on that; and my lady Gordon——"

"Is a very prudent lady, no doubt; but a truce with that odious meeting. It won't arrive these two months."

"Then you go; and don't sell your lute?"

"I have never heard of selling my lute but from yourself. I was sending it to the isle of the Druid for a little concert to-night; to which, if you are harmoniously disposed, I now invite you."

"You perverse gipsey!" said Montague, pulling her ears,—"Why did you suffer me

to put myself in a passion about it? But you shan't send it to-night; you know who says you play like an angel."

"I am going to a scene which angels might gaze on," cried Monimia, eager to divert the discourse;—"I think the country never was so beautiful. I am quite enraptured."

"Then what would you think of a husband in this fine country—eh?" cried Montague, winking to Norman, who would gladly have been spared this mark of confidence: —"I think we had best leave you in it. Go, get on your best-becomes; who knows what this afternoon may produce?"

"Fair weather, I hope, for my little journey," replied Monimia carelessly.—"Williams, order my *gondola*; and should you reach E-leenalin before me, Mr Macalbin, tell Lady Augusta, I mean to take my chance for a welcome, and a share of her chicken."

Norman, who felt as if a load was suddenly taken off his heart, bowed in silence, and retired; while Montague's sweet temper again failed him.

Surely, Monimia, you will not be so cross-grained as leave home, when you know I expect Sir Archibald; just after I have forgiven your follies about the wool. There is

a good girl now; don't provoke me. You know how indulgent I am, and how desirous of your welfare."

"I am quite sensible of that."

"Then what reasonable objection can you have to Sir Archibald? Is he not a fashionable man; and will he not make a most indulgent husband?—whatever little faults he may have, his aunt says, that a prudent, handsome girl like you, might make what she pleased of him. Besides, he is to reform the moment he marries."

"He cannot do better," said Monimia, laughing.

"If you wished for a town house, equipages, parties, and all that, he would indulge you in every thing."

"Perhaps he might."

"Then, if you chose to live in the Highlands all the year round, I am sure he would never contradict you, nor make the least objection."

"I cannot doubt that," answered Monimia, laughing,—"provided I was contented to live alone."

"And for poor people to visit;—I do believe there is more on his other estate than this;—so you would have that pleasure."

"In perfection, I believe. But if you have any other advantage to mention, I beg you would make haste;" and she looked at her watch.

"Now, Monimia, you shall not stir. Come now, be reasonable. I know you have too much, both of sense and spirit, to throw yourself away, or refuse a fashionable man, whom all the ladies are dying for. And only think to be called my Lady, my Lady, at every word. Why, your title will be the same as the Lady of a baron."

"Delightful! and then you to be, 'Mr Montague, my Lady Gordon's brother.'"

"Go, you wheedling creature," said the pin-maker, with a complacent simper; "I suppose Lady Gordon would be nothing the *poorer* for having Miles Montague for her brother, if she behave herself. So dress yourself for dinner, and give Sir Archibald a kind reception;—you know how much my heart is set on the match."

"Then I wish to heaven you would marry him yourself," cried Monimia peevishly; "I am sure he would like you ten times better, for your fortune is ten times larger."

Montague could not help laughing.—"But the heir to the family honours, Monimia," said

he;—"you don't consider that old Lady Gordon has set her heart on him."

"So, out of her sovereign pleasure, she would choose me for *heir-loom* to her superb family! Insolent old woman!—Pray don't speak another word; I have no patience to hear you, or to think of these people."

Montague, who now saw that she was seriously offended, tried to soften her displeasure, and to reason with her, as he called it. After going over the same ground a dozen times, Monimia begged him to drop the subject, and assured him, that all the titles attached to the name of Gordon, did not sound to her ears half so pleasantly as "Montague."

"Or Macalbin perhaps?" cried Montague, in a peculiar tone. Monimia coloured violently at this rude insinuation, and, provoked to defiance, haughtily replied, "Perhaps so."

"Oh, mighty fine, Madam!" cried he, stumping about in a rage,—"mighty fine! but I shall know what to think."

"Then I shall afford you leisure to do so;" and she opened the door, but suddenly changed colour, and started back, exclaiming, in a faint voice,—"Macalbin, good Heaven!"

It was indeed Norman, who, more embarrassed, if possible, than herself, was attempting

to explain why he was by the door, when Williams came down stairs with some pamphlets going to Eleenalin, and apologized for having detained him.

Monimia instantly retired to her chamber, covered with the blushes of ingenuous shame, the pride and delicacy of her woman's heart upbraiding the rashness of her behaviour.

Montague, much alarmed at the advantage the young man might be disposed to take of what he had heard, was now eager to do away the impression, and affected to treat the whole as a jest.

"He! he! he! Macalbin," said he,—"so you overheard Monimia and me *tifting* a little. She has a rare spirit of her own; but I have always my own way in the end: though we make believe to quarrel for a while, she takes my advice in every thing. To hear how the saucy hussey will talk of those she loves best!—for she has abundance of pride, I'll assure you: as my late brother used to say, when we heard of girls making foolish marriages, *below their station*; 'I am sure my Monimia will never disgrace her family, or her judgment, by such a choice.'"

"No confidence could be better placed," said Norman, half disgusted, and half amused,

"Long may it be the retreat of innocent pleasure. The young and the happy have long haunted the isle of the Druid;—I cannot be the first to awaken its echoes with the voice of sadness."

They agreed to remain for that evening in Eleenalin; and Lady Augusta, who had many latent inducements to relate her story, entered on the narrative of her sufferings, with the dignified tranquillity of one who has risen above the airy nothings of mortality; and, in contemplating more elevated concerns, obtained a portion of their sublimity.

END OF VOL. I.

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